THE

# TRAGEDY

OF

# *JANE SHORE.*

Written in Imitation of

SHAKESPEAR'S STYLE.

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By *N. ROWE*, Esq;

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——— *Conjux ubi pristinus illi*
*Respondet Curis.* VIRG.

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The NINTH EDITION.

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TO HIS

# GRACE the DUKE

OF

# QUEENSBERRY and DOVER,

Marquis of BEVERLEY, &c.

MY LORD,

I Have long lain under the greateſt Obligation to Your Grace's Family, and nothing has been more in my Wiſhes, than that I might be able to diſcharge ſome Part, at leaſt, of ſo large a Debt. But your Noble Birth and Fortune, the Power, Number, and Goodneſs of thoſe Friends you have already, have placed You in ſuch an Independency on the reſt of the World, that the Services I am able to render to Your Grace can never be advantageous, I am ſure not neceſſary, to You in any Part of Your Life. However, the next Piece of Gratitude, and the only one I am capable of, is the Ac-

knowledgment of what I owe: And as this is the moſt public, and indeed the only Way I have of doing it, Your Grace will pardon me if I take this Opportunity to let the World know the Duty and Honour I had for Your Illuſtrious Father. It is, I muſt confeſs, a very tender Point to touch upon; and at the firſt Sight may ſeem an ill-choſen Compliment, to renew the Memory of ſuch a Loſs, eſpecially to a Diſpoſition ſo ſweet and gentle, and to a Heart ſo ſenſible of filial Piety, as Your Grace's has been, even from Your earlieſt Childhood. But perhaps this is one of thoſe Griefs by which the Heart may be made better; and if the Remembrance of his Death bring Heavineſs along with it, the Honour that is paid to his Memory by all good Men, ſhall wipe away thoſe Tears, and the Example of his Life, ſet before Your Eyes, ſhall be of the greateſt Advantage to Your Grace in the Conduct and future Diſpoſition of Your Own.

In a Character ſo amiable as that of the Duke of QUEENSBERRY was, there can be no Part ſo proper to begin with, as that which was in him, and is in all good Men, the Foundation of all other Virtues, either Religious or Civil, I mean Good-nature: Good-nature, which is Friendſhip between Man and Man, Good-breeding in Courts, Charity in Religion, and the true Spring of all Beneficence in general. This was a Quality he poſſeſſed in as great a Meaſure as any Gentleman I ever had

the

the Honour to know. It was this natural Sweetneſs of Temper, which made him the beſt Man in the World to live with, in any Kind of Relation. It was this made him a good Maſter to his Servants, a good Friend to his Friends, and the tendereſt Father to his Children. For the laſt, I can have no better Voucher than Your Grace; and for the reſt, I may appeal to all that have had the Honour to know him. There was a Spirit and Pleaſure in his Converſation, which always enlivened the Company he was in; which, together with a certain Eaſineſs and Frankneſs in his Diſpoſition, that did not at all derogate from the Dignity of his Birth and Character, rendered him infinitely agreeable. And as no Man had a more delicate Taſte of natural Wit, his Converſation always abounded in Good-humour.

For thoſe Parts of his Character which related to the Public, as he was a Nobleman of the firſt Rank, and a Miniſter of State, they will be beſt known by the great Employments he paſſed through; all which he diſcharged worthily as to himſelf, juſtly to the Princes who employed him, and advantageouſly for his Country. There is no Occaſion to enumerate his ſeveral Employments, as Secretary of State, for *Scotland* in particular, for *Britain* in general, or Lord High Commiſſioner of *Scotland*; which laſt Office he bore more than once; but at no Time more honourably, and (as I hope) more happily, both for the preſent Age, and

for Poſterity, than when he laid the Foundation for the *Britiſh* Union. The Conſtancy and Addreſs which he manifeſted on that Occaſion, are ſtill freſh in every body's Memory; and perhaps when our Children ſhall reap thoſe Benefits from that Work, which ſome People do not foreſee and hope for now, they may remember the Duke of QUEENSBERRY with that Gratitude, which ſuch a Piece of Service done to his Country deſerves.

He ſhewed, upon all Occaſions, a ſtrict and immediate Attachment to the Crown, in the legal Service of which, no Man could exert himſelf more dutifully nor more ſtrenuouſly: And at the ſame Time no Man gave more bold and more generous Evidences of the Love he bore to his Country. Of the latter, there can be no better Proof, than the Share he had in the late happy Revolution; nor of the former, than that dutiful Reſpect, and unſhaken Fidelity, which he preſerved for her preſent Majeſty, even to his laſt Moments.

With ſo many good and great Qualities, it is not at all ſtrange that he poſſeſſed ſo large a Share, as he was known to have, in the Eſteem of the Queen, and her immediate Predeceſſor; nor that thoſe great Princes ſhould repoſe the higheſt Confidence in him: And at the ſame Time, what a Pattern has he left behind him for the Nobility in general, and for Your Grace in particular, to copy after!

Your

Your Grace will forgive me, if my Zeal for Your Welfare and Honour (which no Body has more at Heart than myſelf) ſhall preſs You with ſome more than ordinary Warmth to the Imitation of Your Noble Father's Virtues. You have, my Lord, many great Advantages, which may encourage You to go on in Purſuit of this Reputation: It has pleaſed God to give You naturally that Sweetneſs of Temper, which, as I have before hinted, is the Foundation of all good Inclinations. You have the Honour to be born, not only of the greateſt, but of the beſt Parents; of a Gentleman generally beloved, and generally lamented; and of a Lady adorned with all Virtues that enter into the Character of a good Wife, an admirable Friend, and a moſt indulgent Mother. The natural Advantages of Your Mind, have been cultivated by the moſt proper Arts and Manners of Education. You have the Care of many noble Friends, and eſpecially of an excellent Uncle, to watch over You in the Tenderneſs of Your Youth. You ſet out amongſt the firſt of Mankind, and I doubt not but your Virtues will be equal to the Dignity of Your Rank.

That I may live to ſee Your Grace eminent for the Love of Your Country, for Your Service and Duty to Your Prince, and, in convenient Time, adorned with all the Honours that have ever been conferred upon Your Noble Family: That you may be diſtinguiſhed to Po-

ſterity, as the braveſt, greateſt, and beſt Man of the Age You live in, is the hearty Wiſh, and Prayer of,

*MY LORD,*

*Your Grace's moſt Obedient, and*

*moſt Faithful, Humble Servant,*




N. ROWE.

# PROLOGUE,

## Spoken by Mr. *WILKS.*

*TO Night, if you have brought your good old Taſte,*
*We'll treat you with a downright* Engliſh *Feaſt:*
*A Tale, which told long ſince in homely wiſe,*
*Hath never fail'd of melting gentle Eyes.*
*Let no nice* Sir *deſpiſe our hapleſs Dame,*
*Becauſe recording Ballads chaunt her Name;*
*Thoſe venerable ancient Song-Enditers*
*Soar'd many a Pitch above our modern Writers:*
*They caterwaul'd in no Romantick Ditty,*
*Sighing for* Phillis's, *or* Chloe's *Pity.*
*Juſtly they drew the Fair, and ſpoke her plain,*
*And ſung her by her Chriſtian Name—'twas* Jane.
*Our Numbers may be more refin'd than thoſe,*
*But what we've gain'd in Verſe, we've loſt in Proſe.*
*Their Words no Shuffling, Double-Meaning knew,*
*Their Speech was homely, but their Hearts were true.*
*In ſuch an Age, Immortal* Shakeſpear *wrote,*
*By no quaint Rules, nor hampering Criticks taught;*
*With rough majeſtick Force he mov'd the Heart,*
*And Strength and Nature made Amends for Art.*
*Our humble Author does his Steps purſue,*
*He owns he had the mighty Bard in view;*
*And in theſe Scenes has made it more his Care*
*To rouze the Paſſions, than to charm the Ear.*
*Yet for thoſe gentle* Beaux *who love the Chime,*
*The Ends of Acts ſtill gingle into Rhime.*
*The* Ladies, *too, he hopes will not complain,*
*Here are ſome Subjects for a ſofter Strain,*
*A Nymph forſaken, and a perjur'd Swain.*
*What moſt he fears, is, leſt the Dames ſhould frown,*
*The Dames of Wit and Pleaſure about Town,*
*To ſee our Picture drawn unlike their own.*
*But leſt that Error ſhould provoke to Fury*
*The hoſpitable Hundreds of* Old Drury,
*He bid me ſay, in our* Jane Shore's *Defence,*
*She dole'd about the charitable Pence,*
*Built Hoſpitals, turn'd Saint, and dy'd long ſince.*

*For her Example, whatſoe'er we make it,*
*They have their Choice to let alone or take it,*
*Tho' few, as I conceive, will think it meet,*
*To weep ſo ſorely, for a Sin ſo ſweet:*
*Or mourn and mortify the pleaſant Senſe,*
*To riſe in Tragedy two Ages hence.*

# Dramatis Perſonæ.

## At DRURY-LANE, 1765.

| | |
|---|---|
| Duke of *Gloſter*, | Mr. *Love.* |
| Lord *Haſtings*, | Mr. *Holland.* |
| *Cateſby*, | Mr. *Parſons.* |
| Sir *Richard Ratcliffe*, | Mr. *Ackman.* |
| *Bellmour*, | Mr. *Packer.* |
| *Dumont*, | Mr. *Havard.* |
| *Alicia*, | Mrs. *Cibber.* |
| *Jane Shore.* | Mrs. *Yates.* |

## At COVENT-GARDEN.

| | |
|---|---|
| Duke of *Gloſter*, | Mr. *Clarke.* |
| Lord *Haſtings*, | Mr. *Smith.* |
| *Cateſby*, | Mr. *Anderſon.* |
| Sir *Richard Ratcliffe*, | Mr. *Davis.* |
| *Bellmour*, | Mr. *Gibſon.* |
| *Dumont*, | Mr. *Roſs.* |
| *Alicia*, | Mrs. *Ward.* |
| *Jane Shore*, | Miſs *Macklin.* |

Several Lords of the Council, Guards, and Attendants.

SCENE LONDON.



THE

# THE TRAGEDY OF *JANE SHORE.*

## ACT I. SCENE I.

SCENE *the Tower.*

*Enter the Duke of* Gloſter, *Sir* Richard Ratcliffe, *and* Cateſby.

*GLOSTER.*

THUS far Succeſs attends upon our Councils,
And each Event has anſwer'd to my Wiſh;
The Queen and all her upſtart Race are quell'd;
*Dorſet* is baniſh'd, and her Brother *Rivers*
Ere this lies ſhorter by the Head at *Pomfret*,
The Nobles have, with joint Concurrence, nam'd me
Protector of the Realm: My Brother's Children,
Young *Edward* and the little *York*, are lodg'd
Here, ſafe within the Tower. How ſay you, Sirs,
Does not this Buſineſs wear a lucky Face?
The Sceptre and the Golden Wreath of Royalty
Seem hung within my Reach.

*Ratcl.* Then take 'em to you,
And wear 'em long and worthily: You are
The laſt remaining Male of princely *York*,
(For *Edward's* Boys, the State eſteems not of 'em,)
And therefore on your Sov'reignty and Rule

The

The Common-Weal does her Dependance make,
And leans upon your Highneſs' able Hand.
*Cat.* And yet To-morrow does the Council meet
To fix a Day for *Edward*'s Coronation.
Who can expound this Riddle?
*Gloſt.* That can I.
Thoſe Lords are each one my approv'd good Friends,
Of ſpecial Truſt and Nearneſs to my Boſom;
And howſoever buſy they may ſeem,
And diligent to buſtle in the State,
Their Zeal goes on no further than we lead,
And at our Bidding ſtays.
*Cat.* Yet there is one,
And he amongſt the Foremoſt in his Power,
Of whom I wiſh your Highneſs were aſſur'd.
For me, perhaps it is my Nature's Fault,
I own I doubt of his Inclining much.
*Gloſt.* I gueſs the Man at whom your Words wou'd point:
*Haſtings*——
*Cat.* The ſame.
*Gloſt.* He bears me great Good will.
*Cat.* 'Tis true, to you, as to the Lord Protector
And *Gloſter*'s Duke, he bows with lowly Service:
But were he bid to cry, God ſave King *Richard*,
Then tell me in what Terms he would reply.
Believe me, I have prov'd the Man, and found him:
I know he bears a moſt religious Reverence
To his dead Maſter *Edward*'s Royal Memory,
And whither that may lead him, is moſt plain.
Yet more——One of that ſtubborn Sort he is,
Who, if they once grow fond of an Opinion,
They call it Honour, Honeſty, and Faith,
And ſooner part with Life than let it go.
*Gloſt.* And yet this tough impracticable Heart,
Is govern'd by a dainty-finger'd Girl;
Such Flaws are found in the moſt worthy Natures;
A laughing, toying, wheedling, whimpering She
Shall make him amble on a Goſſip's Meſſage,
And take the Diſtaff with a Hand as patient
As e'er did *Hercules*.

*Rat.*

BRITISH MUSEUM 15 65 OCT

*Rat.* The fair *Alicia*,
Of noble Birth and exquiſite of Feature,
Has held him long a Vaſſal to her Beauty.
*Cat.* I fear, he fails in his Allegiance there;
Or my Intelligence is falſe, or elſe
The Dame has been too laviſh of her Feaſt,
And fed him till he loaths.
*Gloſt.* No more, he comes.

*Enter Lord* Haſtings.

L. *Haſt.* Health and the Happineſs of many Days
Attend upon your Grace.
*Gloſt.* My good Lord Chamberlain!
We're much beholden to your gentle Friendſhip.
L. *Haſt.* My Lord, I come an humble Suitor to you.
*Gloſt.* In right good Time. Speak out your Pleaſure freely.
L. *Haſt.* I am to move your Highneſs in behalf
Of *Shore*'s unhappy Wife.
*Gloſt.* Say you, of *Shore?*
L. *Haſt.* Once a bright Star that held her Place on high:
The firſt and faireſt of our *Engliſh* Dames,
While Royal *Edward* held the ſov'reign Rule.
Now ſunk in Grief, and pining with Deſpair,
Her waining Form no longer ſhall incite
Envy in Woman, or Deſire in Man.
She never ſees the Sun, but thro' her Tears,
And wakes to ſigh the live-long Night away.
*Gloſt.* Marry! the Times are badly chang'd with her
From *Edward*'s Days to theſe. Then all was Jollity,
Feaſting and Mirth, light Wantonneſs and Laughter,
Piping and Playing, Minſtrelſy and Maſquing;
'Till Life fled from us like an idle Dream,
A Shew of Mommery without a Meaning.
My Brother, Reſt and Pardon to his Soul,
Is gone to his Account, for this his Minion,
The Revel-rout is done——But you were ſpeaking
Concerning her——I have been told, that you
Are frequent in your Viſitation to her.

L. *Haſt.*

L. *Haſt.* No farther, my good Lord, than friendly Pity,
And tender-hearted Charity allow.
*Gloſt.* Go to: I did not mean to chide you for it.
For, ſooth to ſay, I hold it noble in you
To cheriſh the Diſtreſs'd——On with your Tale.
L. *Haſt.* Thus it is, gracious Sir, that certain Officers,
Uſing the Warrant of your mighty Name,
With Inſolence unjuſt, and lawleſs Power,
Have ſeiz'd upon the Lands, which late ſhe held
By Grant from her great Maſter *Edward*'s Bounty.
*Gloſt.* Somewhat of this, but ſlightly, have I heard;
And tho' ſome Counſellors of forward Zeal,
Some of moſt ceremonious Sanctity,
And bearded Wiſdom, often have provok'd
The Hand of Juſtice to fall heavy on her;
Yet ſtill, in kind Compaſſion of her Weakneſs,
And tender Memory of *Edward*'s Love,
I have with-held the mercileſs ſtern Law
From doing Outrage on her helpleſs Beauty.
L. *Haſt.* Good Heav'n, who renders Mercy back for Mercy,
With open handed Bounty ſhall repay you:
This gentle Deed ſhall fairly be ſet foremoſt,
To ſcreen the wild Eſcapes of lawleſs Paſſion,
And the long Train of Frailties Fleſh is Heir to.
*Gloſt.* Thus far, the Voice of Pity pleaded only:
Our farther and more full Extent of Grace
Is given to your Requeſt. Let her attend,
And to ourſelf deliver up her Griefs.
She ſhall be heard with Patience, and each Wrong
At full redreſs'd. But I have other News
Which much import us both, for ſtill my Fortunes
Go hand in hand with yours: Our common Foes,
The Queen's Relations, our new-fangled Gentry,
Have fall'n their haughty Creſts—That for your Privacy.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE

## SCENE II.

*An Apartment in* Jane Shore's *Houſe.*

*Enter* Bellmour *and* Dumont.

*Bell.* How ſhe has liv'd you have heard my Tale already,
The reſt your own Attendance in her Family,
Where I have found the Means this Day to place you,
And nearer Obſervation beſt will tell you.
See with what ſad and ſober Cheer ſhe comes.

*Enter* Jane Shore.

Sure, or I read her Viſage much amiſs,
Or Grief beſets her hard. Save you, fair Lady,
The Bleſſings of the cheerful Morn be on you,
And greet your Beauty with its opening Sweets.

*J. Sh.* My gentle Neighbour! your good Wiſhes ſtill
Purſue my hapleſs Fortunes: Ah! good *Bellmour!*
How few, like thee, enquire the Wretched out,
And court the Offices of ſoft Humanity?
Like thee reſerve their Raiment for the Naked,
Reach out their Bread to feed the crying Orphan,
Or mix their pitying Tears with thoſe that weep?
Thy Praiſe deſerves a better Tongue than mine,
To ſpeak and bleſs thy Name. Is this the Gentleman,
Whoſe friendly Service you commended to me?

*Bell.* Madam, it is.

*J. Sh.* A venerable Aſpect! [*Aſide.*
Age ſits with decent Grace upon his Viſage,
And worthily becomes his Silver Locks;
He wears the Marks of many Years well ſpent,
Of Virtue, Truth well try'd, and wiſe Experience;
A Friend like this, would ſuit my Sorrows well.
Fortune, I fear me, Sir, has meant you ill, [*To* Dumont.
Who pays your Merit with that ſcanty Pittance,
Which my poor Hand and humble Roof can give.
But to ſupply theſe golden Vantages,
Which elſewhere you might find, expect to meet
A juſt Regard and Value for your Worth,

The

The Welcome of a Friend, and the free Partnerſhip
Of all that little Good the World allows me.

*Dum.* You over-rate me much; and all my Anſwer
Muſt be my future Truth; let that ſpeak for me,
And make up my Deſerving.

*J. Sh.* Are you of *England?*

*Dum.* No, gracious Lady, *Flanders* claims my Birth;
At *Antwerp* has my conſtant Biding been,
Where ſometimes I have known more plenteous Days
Than thoſe which now my failing Age affords.

*J. Sh.* Alas! at *Antwerp!*--Oh forgive my Tears! [*Weeping.*
They fall for my Offences———and muſt fall
Long, long ere they ſhall waſh my Stains away.
You knew perhaps—oh Grief! oh Shame!--my Huſband.

*Dum.* I knew him well—but ſtay this Flood of Anguiſh,
The ſenſeleſs Grave feels not your pious Sorrows:
Three Years and more are paſt, ſince I was bid,
With many of our common Friends, to wait him
To his laſt peaceful Manſion. I attended,
Sprinkled his clay-cold Corſe with holy Drops,
According to our Church's rev'rend Rite,
And ſaw him laid, in hallow'd Ground, to reſt.

*J. Sh.* Oh! that my Soul had known no Joy but him,
That I had liv'd within his guiltleſs Arms,
And dying ſlept in Innocence beſide him!
But now his honeſt Duſt abhors the Fellowſhip,
And ſcorns to mix with mine.

*Enter a Servant.*

*Ser.* The Lady *Alicia*
Attends your Leiſure.

*J. Sh.* Say I wiſh to ſee her. [*Exit Servant.*
Pleaſe, gentle Sir, one Moment to retire,
I'll wait you on the Inſtant; and inform you
Of each unhappy Circumſtance, in which
Your friendly Aid and Counſel much may ſtead me.
[*Exeunt* Bellmour *and* Dumont.

*Enter* Alicia.

*Alic.* Still, my fair Friend, ſtill ſhall I find you thus?
Still ſhall theſe Sighs heave after one another,
Theſe trickling Drops chaſe one another ſtill,

As

As if the poſting Meſſengers of Grief,
Could overtake the Hours fled far away,
And make old Time come back?
*J. Sh.* No, my *Alicia*,
Heaven and his Saints be witneſs to my Thoughts,
There is no Hour of all my Life o'erpaſt,
That I could wiſh ſhould take its Turn again.
*Alic.* And yet ſome of thoſe Days my Friend has known,
Some of thoſe Years might paſs for golden Ones,
At leaſt if Womankind can judge of Happineſs.
What could we wiſh, we who delight in Empire,
Whoſe Beauty is our ſov'reign Good, and gives us
Our Reaſons to rebel, and Pow'r to reign,
What could we more than to behold a Monarch,
Lovely, renown'd, a Conqueror, and young,
Bound in our Chains, and ſighing at our Feet?
*J. Sh.* 'Tis true, the Royal *Edward* was a Wonder,
The goodly Pride of all our *Engliſh* Youth;
He was the very Joy of all that ſaw him.
Form'd to delight, to love, and to perſuade.
Impaſſive Spirits, and angelic Natures
Might have been charm'd, like yielding human Weakneſs,
Stoop'd from their Heav'n, and liſten'd to his Talking.
But what had I to do with Kings and Courts?
My humble Lot had caſt me far beneath him;
And that he was the firſt of all Mankind,
The braveſt, and moſt lovely, was my Curſe.
*Alic.* Sure, ſomething more than Fortune join'd your Loves;
Nor could his Greatneſs, and his gracious Form,
Be elſewhere match'd ſo well, as to the Sweetneſs
And Beauty of my Friend.
*J. Sh.* Name him no more:
He was the Bane and Ruin of my Peace.
This Anguiſh and theſe Tears, theſe are the Legacies
His fatal Love has left me. Thou wilt ſee me,
Believe me, my *Alicia*, thou wilt ſee me,
E'er yet a few ſhort Days paſs o'er my Head,
Abandon'd to the very utmoſt Wretchedneſs.
The Hand of Pow'r has ſeiz'd almoſt the whole
Of what was left for needy Life's Support;

Shortly

Shortly thou wilt behold me poor and kneeling
Before thy charitable Door for Bread.

*Alic.* Joy of my Life, my deareſt *Shore*, forbear
To wound my Heart with thy foreboding Sorrows,
Raiſe thy ſad Soul to better Hopes than theſe,
Lift up thy Eyes, and let them ſhine once more,
Bright as the Morning Sun above the Miſt.
Exert thy Charms, ſeek out the ſtern Protector,
And ſooth his ſavage Temper with thy Beauty:
Spite of his deadly, unrelenting Nature,
He ſhall be mov'd to pity and redreſs thee.

*J. Sh.* My Form, alas! has long forgot to pleaſe;
The Scene of Beauty and Delight is chang'd;
No Roſes bloom upon my fading Cheek,
Nor laughing Graces wanton in my Eyes;
But haggard Grief, lean-looking ſallow Care,
And pining Diſcontent, a rueful Train,
Dwell on my Brow, all hideous and forlorn.
One only Shadow of a Hope is left me;
The noble-minded *Haſtings*, of his Goodneſs,
Has kindly underta'en to be my Advocate,
And move my humble Suit to angry *Gloſter*.

*Alic.* Does *Haſtings* undertake to plead your Cauſe?
But wherefore ſhould he not? *Haſtings* has Eyes;
The gentle Lord has a right tender Heart,
Melting and eaſy, yielding to Impreſſion,
And catching the ſoft Flame from each new Beauty;
But yours ſhall charm him long.

*J. Sh.* Away, you Flatterer!
Nor charge his gen'rous Meaning with a Weakneſs,
Which his great Soul and Virtue muſt diſdain.
Too much of Love thy hapleſs Friend has prov'd,
Too many giddy fooliſh Hours are gone,
And in fantaſtic Meaſures danc'd away:
May the remaining few know only Friendſhip.
So thou, my deareſt, trueſt, beſt *Alicia*,
Vouchſafe to lodge me in thy gentle Heart,
A Partner there; I will give up Mankind,
Forget the Tranſports of encreaſing Paſſion,
And all the Pangs we feel for its Decay.

*Alic.*

*Alic.* Live! live and reign for ever in my Boſom,
[*Embracing.*
Safe and unrivall'd there poſſeſs thy own;
And you, ye brighteſt of the Stars above,
Ye Saints that once were Women here below,
Be Witneſs of the Truth, the holy Friendſhip,
Which here to this my other ſelf I vow.
If I not hold her nearer to my Soul,
Than every other Joy the World can give,
Let Poverty, Deformity, and Shame,
Diſtraction and Deſpair ſeize me on Earth,
Let not my faithleſs Ghoſt have Peace hereafter,
Nor taſte the Bliſs of your celeſtial Fellowſhip.

*J. Sh.* Yes, thou art true, and only thou art true;
Therefore theſe Jewels, once the laviſh Bounty
Of Royal *Edward*'s Love, I truſt to thee;
[*Giving a Caſket.*
Receive this all, that I can call my own,
And let it reſt unknown, and ſafe with thee:
That if the State's Injuſtice ſhould oppreſs me,
Strip me of all, and turn me out a Wanderer,
My Wretchedneſs may find Relief from thee,
And Shelter from the Storm.

*Alic.* My all is thine;
One common Hazard ſhall attend us both,
And both be fortunate, or both be wretched.
But let thy fearful doubting Heart be ſtill,
The Saints and Angels have thee in their Charge,
And all Things ſhall be well. Think not, the good,
The gentle Deeds of Mercy thou haſt done,
Shall die forgotten all; the Poor, the Pris'ner,
The Fatherleſs, the Friendleſs, and the Widow,
Who daily own the Bounty of thy Hand,
Shall cry to Heav'n, and pull a Bleſſing on thee;
Ev'n Man, the mercileſs Inſulter Man,
Man, who rejoices in our Sex's Weakneſs,
Shall pity thee, and with unwonted Goodneſs
Forget thy Failings, and record thy Praiſe.

*J. Sh.* Why ſhould I think that Man will do for me
What yet he never did for Wretches like me?
Mark by what partial Juſtice we are judg'd:

Such

Such is the Fate unhappy Women find,
And ſuch the Curſe intail'd upon our Kind,
That Man, the lawleſs Libertine, may rove,
Free and unqueſtion'd through the Wilds of Love;
While Woman, Senſe and Nature's eaſy Fool,
If poor weak Woman ſwerve from Virtue's Rule,
If ſtrongly charm'd, ſhe leave the thorny Way,
And in the ſofter Paths of Pleaſure ſtray,
Ruin enſues, Reproach and endleſs Shame,
And one falſe Step entirely damns her Fame:
In vain with Tears the Loſs ſhe may deplore,
In vain look back to what ſhe was before;
She ſets, like Stars that fall, to riſe no more. [*Exeunt.*

ACT

## ACT II. SCENE I.

SCENE *continues.*

*Enter* Alicia.

[*Speaking to* Jane Shore *as entering.*

*Alic.* NO farther, gentle Friend; good Angels guard you,
And ſpread their gracious Wings about your Slumbers.
The drowſy Night grows on the World, and now
The buſy Craftſmen and o'er-labour'd Hind
Forget the Travail of the Day in Sleep:
Care only wakes, and moping Penſiveneſs;
With meagre diſcontented Looks they ſit,
And watch the waſting of the Midnight Taper.
Such Vigils muſt I keep, ſo wakes my Soul,
Reſtleſs and ſelf-tormented! Oh falſe *Haſtings!*
Thou haſt deſtroy'd my Peace. [*Knocking without.*
What Noiſe is that!
What Viſitor is this, who with bold Freedom,
Breaks in upon the peaceful Night and Reſt,
With ſuch a rude Approach?

*Enter a Servant.*

*Ser.* One from the Court,
Lord *Haſtings* (as I think) demands my Lady.

*Alic. Haſtings!* Be ſtill my Heart, and try to meet him
With his own Arts: With Falſhood—But he comes.

*Enter Lord* Haſtings.

[*Speaks to a Servant as entering.*

L. *Haſt.* Diſmiſs my Train, and wait alone without.
*Alicia* here! Unfortunate Encounter!
But be it as it may.

*Alic.* When humbly, thus,
The Great deſcend to viſit the Afflicted,
When thus unmindful of their Reſt, they come
To ſooth the Sorrows of the midnight Mourner,
Comfort comes with them, like the golden Sun,
Diſpels

Diſpels the ſullen Shades with her ſweet Influence,
And chears the melancholy Houſe of Care.

L. *Haſt.* 'Tis true, I would not over-rate a Courteſy,
Nor let the Coldneſs of Delay hang on it,
To nip and blaſt its Favour, like a Froſt;
But rather choſe, at this late Hour, to come,
That your Fair Friend may know I have prevail'd;
The Lord Protector has receiv'd her Suit,
And means to ſhew her Grace.

*Alic.* My Friend! my Lord.

L. *Haſt.* Yes, Lady, yours: None has a Right more ample
To taſk my Pow'r than you.

*Alic.* I want the Words,
To pay you back a Compliment ſo courtly;
But my Heart gueſſes at the friendly Meaning,
And wo'n't die your Debtor.

L. *Haſtings.* 'Tis well, Madam.
But I would ſee your Friend.

*Alic.* O thou falſe Lord!
I would be Miſtreſs of my heaving Heart,
Stifle this riſing Rage, and learn from thee
To dreſs my Face in eaſy dull Indiff'rence:
But two'not be, my Wrongs will tear their Way,
And ruſh at once upon thee.

L. *Haſt.* Are you wiſe?
Have you the Uſe of Reaſon? Do you wake?
What means this Raving? this tranſporting Paſſion?

*Alic.* O thou cool Traitor! thou inſulting Tyrant.
Doſt thou behold my poor diſtracted Heart,
Thus rent with agonizing Love and Rage,
And aſk me what it means? Art thou not falſe?
Am I not ſcorn'd, forſaken, and abandon'd,
Left like a common Wretch, to Shame and Infamy,
Giv'n up to be the Sport of Villains Tongues,
Of laughing Paraſites, and lewd Buffoons;
And all becauſe my Soul has doated on thee
With Love, with Truth, and Tenderneſs unutterable!

L. *Haſt.* Are theſe the Proofs of Tenderneſs and Love?
Theſe endleſs Quarrels, Diſcontents, and Jealouſies,
Theſe never-ceaſing Wailings and Complainings,

Theſe furious Starts, theſe Whirlwinds of the Soul,
Which every other Moment riſe to Madneſs?

*Alic.* What Proof, alas! have I not giv'n of Love?
What have I not abandon'd to thy Arms?
Have I not ſet at nought my noble Birth,
A ſpotleſs Fame, and an unblemiſh'd Race,
The Peace of Innocence, and Pride of Virtue?
My Prodigality has giv'n thee all;
And now I've nothing left me to beſtow,
You hate the wretched Bankrupt you have made.

L. *Haſt.* Why am I thus purſu'd from Place to Place,
Kept in the View, and croſs'd at every Turn?
In vain I fly, and like a hunted Deer,
Scud o'er the Lawns, and haſten to the Covert;
E'er I can reach my Safety, you o'ertake me
With the ſwift Malice of ſome keen Reproach,
And drive the winged Shaft deep in my Heart.

*Alic.* Hither you fly, and here you ſeek Repoſe;
Spite of the poor Deceit, your Arts are known,
Your pious, charitable, Midnight Viſits.

L. *Haſt.* If you are wiſe, and prize your Peace of Mind,
Yet take the friendly Counſel of my Love;
Believe me true, nor liſten to your Jealouſy.
Let not that Devil, which undoes your Sex,
That curſed Curioſity ſeduce you,
To hunt for needleſs Secrets, which, neglected,
Shall never hurt your Quiet; but once known,
Shall ſit upon your Heart, pinch it with Pain,
And baniſh the ſweet Sleep for ever from you.
Go to——be yet adviſ'd——

*Alic.* Doſt thou in Scorn,
Preach Patience to my Rage? And bid me tamely
Sit like a poor contented Ideot down,
Nor dare to think thou'ſt wrong'd me—Ruin ſeize thee,
And ſwift Perdition overtake thy Treachery;
Have I the leaſt remaining Cauſe to doubt?
Haſt thou endeavour'd once to hide thy Falſhood?
To hide it, might have ſpoke ſome little Tenderneſs,
And ſhewn thee half unwilling to undo me:

But thou diſdain'ſt the Weakneſs of Humanity,
Thy Words, and all thy Actions, have confeſs'd it;
Ev'n now thy Eyes avow it, now they ſpeak,
And inſolently own the glorious Villainy.

L. *Haſt.* Well, then, I own my Heart has broke your Chains.
Patient I bore the painful Bondage long,
At length my gen'rous Love diſdains your Tyranny;
The Bitterneſs and Stings of taunting Jealouſy,
Vexatious Days, and jarring, joyleſs Nights,
Have driv'n him forth to ſeek ſome ſafer Shelter,
Where he may reſt his weary Wings in Peace.

*Alic.* You triumph! do! And with gigantic Pride
Defy impending Vengeance. Heav'n ſhall wink;
No more his Arm ſhall roll the dreadful Thunder,
Nor ſend his Lightnings forth: No more his Juſtice
Shall viſit the preſuming Sons of Men,
But Perjury, like thine, ſhall dwell in Safety.

L. *Haſt.* Whate'er my Fate decrees for me hereafter,
Be preſent to me now, my better Angel!
Preſerve me from the Storm which threatens now,
And if I have beyond Atonement ſinn'd,
Let any other Kind of Plague o'ertake me,
So I eſcape the Fury of that Tongue.

*Alic.* Thy Pray'r is heard—I go—but know, proud Lord,
Howe'er thou ſcorn'ſt the Weakneſs of my Sex,
This feeble Hand may find the Means to reach thee,
Howe'er ſublime in Pow'r, and Greatneſs plac'd,
With royal Favour guarded round and grac'd;
On Eagle's Wings my Rage ſhall urge her Flight,
And hurl thee headlong from thy topmoſt Height;
Then like thy Fate, ſuperior will I ſit,
And view thee fall'n, and grov'ling at my Feet;
See thy laſt Breath with Indignation go,
And tread thee ſinking to the Shades below. [*Ex.* Alic.

L. *Haſt.* How fierce a Fiend is Paſſion; with what Wildneſs,
What Tyranny untam'd, it reigns in Woman!
Unhappy Sex! whoſe eaſy yielding Temper
Gives Way to ev'ry Appetite alike:

Each

Each Guſt of Inclination, uncontroul'd,
Sweeps thro' their Souls and ſets them in an Uproar;
Each Motion of the Heart riſes to Fury,
And Love in their weak Boſoms is a Rage
As terrible as Hate, and as deſtructive.
So the Wind roars o'er the wide, fenceleſs Ocean,
And heaves the Billows of the boiling Deep,
Alike from *North*, from *South*, from *Eaſt*, from *Weſt*;
With equal Force the Tempeſt blows by Turns
From ev'ry Corner of the Seaman's Compaſs.
But ſoft ye now——for here comes one diſclaims
Strife and her wrangling Train; of equal Elements,
Without one jarring Atom was ſhe form'd,
And Gentleneſs, and Joy, make up her Being.

*Enter* Jane Shore.

Forgive me, fair One, if officious Friendſhip
Intrudes on your Repoſe, and comes thus late,
To greet you with the Tidings of Succeſs.
The princely *Gloſter* has vouchſaf'd you Hearing,
To-morrow he expects you at the Court;
There plead your Cauſe with never-failing Beauty,
Speak all your Griefs, and find a full Redreſs.

*J. Sh.* Thus humbly let your lowly Servant bend.
[*Kneeling.*
Thus let me bow my grateful Knee to Earth,
And bleſs your noble Nature for this Goodneſs.

L. *Haſt.* Riſe, gentle Dame, you wrong my Meaning much,
Think me not guilty of a Thought ſo vain,
To ſell my Courteſy for Thanks like theſe.

*J. Sh.* 'Tis true, your Bounty is beyond my ſpeaking:
But tho' my Mouth be dumb, my Heart ſhall thank you;
And when it melts before the Throne of Mercy,
Mourning and bleeding for my paſt Offences,
My fervent Soul ſhall breath one Pray'r for you,
If Pray'rs of ſuch a Wretch are heard on high,
That Heav'n will pay you back, when moſt you need,
The Grace and Goodneſs you have ſhewn to me.

L. *Haſt.* If there be ought of Merit in my Service,
Impute it there, where moſt 'tis due, to Love;

Be kind, my gentle Miſtreſs, to my Wiſhes,
And ſatisfy my panting Heart with Beauty.

*J. Sh.* Alas! my Lord——

L. *Haſt.* Why bend thy Eyes to Earth?
Wherefore theſe Looks of Heavineſs and Sorrow?
Why breathes that Sigh, my Love? And wherefore falls
This trickling Show'r of Tears, to ſtain thy Sweetneſs?

*J. Sh.* If Pity dwells within your noble Breaſt,
(As ſure it does) oh ſpeak not to me thus.

L. *Haſt.* Can I behold thee, and not ſpeak of Love?
Ev'n now thus ſadly as thou ſtand'ſt before me,
Thus deſolate, dejected, and forlorn,
Thy Softneſs ſteals upon my yielding Senſes,
Till my Soul faints, and ſickens with Deſire;
How canſt thou give this Motion to my Heart,
And bid my Tongue be ſtill?

*J. Sh.* Caſt round your Eyes
Upon the high-born Beauties of the Court;
Behold, like opening Roſes, where they bloom,
Sweet to the Senſe, unſully'd all and ſpotleſs;
There chooſe ſome worthy Partner of your Heart,
To fill your Arms, and bleſs your virtuous Bed;
Nor turn your Eyes this Way, where Sin and Miſery,
Like loathſome Weeds, have over-run the Soil,
And the Deſtroyer, Shame, has laid all waſte.

L. *Haſt.* What means this peeviſh, this fantaſtic Change?
Where is thy wonted Pleaſantneſs of Face,
Thy wonted Graces, and thy dimpled Smiles?
Where haſt thou loſt thy Wit, and ſportive Mirth?
That chearful Heart, which us'd to dance for ever,
And caſt a Day of Gladneſs all around thee?

*J. Sh.* Yes, I will own I merit the Reproach;
And for thoſe fooliſh Days of wanton Pride,
My Soul is juſtly humbled to the Duſt:
All Tongues, like yours, are licens'd to upbraid me,
Still to repeat my Guilt, to urge my Infamy,
And treat me like that abject Thing I have been.
Yet let the Saints be Witneſs to this Truth,
That now, tho' late, I look with Horror back,
That I deteſt my wretched Self, and curſe
My paſt polluted Life. All judging Heav'n

Who

Who knows my Crimes, has ſeen my Sorrow for them.
L. *Haſt.* No more of this dull Stuff. 'Tis time enough
To whine and mortify thyſelf with Penance,
When the decaying Senſe is pall'd with Pleaſure,
And weary Nature tires in her laſt Stage;
Then weep and tell thy Beads, when alt'ring Rheums
Have ſtain'd the Luſtre of thy ſtarry Eyes,
And failing Palſies ſhake thy wither'd Hand.
The preſent Moments claim more gen'rous Uſe;
Thy Beauty, Night and Solitude reproach me,
For having talk'd thus long—Come, let me preſs thee,
[*Laying hold on her.*
Pant on thy Boſom, ſink into thy Arms,
And loſe myſelf in the luxurious Fold.
*J. Sh.* Never! by thoſe chaſte Lights above, I ſwear,
My Soul ſhall never know Pollution more;
Forbear, my Lord!—Here let me rather die, [*Kneeling.*
Let quick Deſtruction overtake me here,
And end my Sorrows and my Shame for ever.
L. *Haſt.* Away with this Perverſeneſs,—'tis too much,
Nay, if you ſtrive—'tis monſtrous Affectation. [*Striving.*
*J. Sh.* Retire! I beg you leave me——
L. *Haſt.* Thus to coy it! ——
With one, who knows you too.
*J. Sh.* For Mercy's Sake——
L. *Haſt.* Ungrateful Woman! Is it thus you pay
My Services? ——
*J. Sh.* Abandon me to Ruin——
Rather than urge me——
L. *Haſt.* This Way to your Chamber; [*Pulling her.*
There if you ſtruggle——
*J. Sh.* Help! O gracious Heaven!
Help! Save me! Help! [*Crying out.*
*Enter* Dumont, *he interpoſes.*
*Dum.* My Lord! for Honour's Sake——
L. *Haſt.* Hah! What art thou?—Be gone!
*Dum.* My Duty calls me
To my Attendance on my Miſtreſs here.
*J. Sh.* For Pity let me go——
L. *Haſt.* Avaunt! Baſe Groom——
At Diſtance wait, and know thy Office better.

*Dum.* Forego your Hold, my Lord! 'tis moſt unmanly
This Violence———

L. *Haſt.* Avoid the Room this Moment,
Or I will tread thy Soul out.

*Dum.* No, my Lord———
The common Ties of Manhood call me now,
And bid me thus ſtand up in the Defence
Of an oppreſs'd, unhappy, helpleſs Woman.

L. *Haſt.* And doſt thou know me, Slave?

*Dum.* Yes, thou proud Lord!
I know thee well, know thee with each Advantage,
Which Wealth, or Power, or noble Birth can give thee.
I know thee, too, for one who ſtains thoſe Honours,
And blots a long illuſtrious Line of Anceſtry,
By poorly daring thus to wrong a Woman.

L. *Haſt.* 'Tis wond'rous well! I ſee, my ſaint-like Dame,
You ſtand provided of your Braves and Ruffians,
To man your Cauſe, and bluſter in your Brothel.

*Dum.* Take back the foul Reproach, unmanner'd Railer!
Nor urge my Rage too far, leſt thou ſhould'ſt find
I have as daring Spirits in my Blood
As thou, or any of thy Race e'er boaſted;
And tho' no gaudy Titles grac'd my Birth,
Titles, the ſervile Courtier's lean Reward,
Sometimes the Pay of Virtue, but more oft
The Hire which Greatneſs gives to Slaves and Sycophants,
Yet Heav'n that made me honeſt, made me more
Than ever King did when he made a Lord.

L. *Haſt.* Inſolent Villain! Henceforth let this teach thee
[*Draws and ſtrikes him.*
The Diſtance 'twixt a Peaſant and a Prince.

*Dum.* Nay, then, my Lord! (*drawing*) Learn you by this
how well
An Arm reſolv'd can guard its Maſter's Life. [*They fight.*

*J. Sh.* Oh my diſtracting Fears! Hold, for ſweet Heav'n.
[*They fight,* Dumont *diſarms Lord* Haſtings.

L. *Haſt.* Confuſion! baffled by a baſe-born Hind!

*Dum.* Now, haughty Sir, where is our Difference now?
Your Life is in my Hand, and did not Honour,
The Gentleneſs of Blood, and inborn Virtue
(Howe'er unworthy I may ſeem to you)

Plead

Plead in my Boſom, I ſhould take the Forfeit.
But wear your Sword again; and know, a Lord
Oppos'd againſt a Man, is but a Man.

*L. Haſt.* Curſe on my failing Hand! Your better Fortune
Has given you Vantage o'er me; but perhaps
Your Triumph may be bought with dear Repentance.
[*Exit.*

*J. Sh.* Alas! what have you done! Know ye the Pow'r,
The Mightineſs that waits upon this Lord?

*Dum.* Fear not, my worthieſt Miſtreſs; 'tis a Cauſe
In which Heaven's Guards ſhall wait you. O purſue,
Purſue the ſacred Counſels of your Soul,
Which urge you on to Virtue; let not Danger,
Nor the incumbring World, make faint your Purpoſe.
Aſſiſting Angels ſhall conduct your Steps,
Bring you to Bliſs, and crown your End with Peace.

*J. Sh.* Oh that my Head were laid, my ſad Eyes clos'd,
And my cold Corſe wound in my Shrowd to reſt;
My painful Heart will never ceaſe to beat,
Will never know a Moment's Peace till then.

*Dum.* Wou'd you be happy? Leave this fatal Place,
Fly from the Court's pernicious Neighbourhood;
Where Innocence is ſham'd, and bluſhing Modeſty
Is made the Scorner's Jeſt; where Hate, Deceit,
And deadly Ruin, wear the Maſques of Beauty,
And draw deluded Fools with Shews of Pleaſure.

*J. Sh.* Where ſhould I fly, thus helpleſs and forlorn,
Of Friends, and all the Means of Life bereft?

*Dum. Bellmour*, whoſe friendly Care ſtill wakes to ſerve you,
Has found you out a little peaceful Refuge,
Far from the Court and the tumultuous City.
Within an ancient Foreſt's ample Verge,
There ſtands a lonely, but a healthful Dwelling,
Built for Convenience and the Uſe of Life:
Around it Fallows, Meads, and Paſtures fair,
A little Garden, and a limpid Brook,
By Nature's own Contrivance ſeem'd diſpos'd;
No Neighbours, but a few poor ſimple Clowns,

Honeſt and true, with a well-meaning Prieſt:
No Faction, or domeſtic Fury's Rage,
Did e'er diſturb the Quiet of that Place,
When the contending Nobles ſhook the Land
With *York* and *Lancaſter's* diſputed Sway.
Your Virtue there may find a ſafe Retreat
From the inſulting Pow'rs of wicked Greatneſs.

*J. Sh.* Can there be ſo much Happineſs in Store!
A Cell like that is all my Hopes aſpire to.
Haſte, then, and thither let us take our Flight,
E'er the Clouds gather, and the wint'ry Sky
Deſcends in Storms to intercept our Paſſage.

*Dum.* Will you then go? you glad my very Soul;
Baniſh your Fears, caſt all your Cares on me;
Plenty and Eaſe, and Peace of Mind ſhall wait you,
And make your latter Days of Life moſt happy.
Oh, Lady! but I muſt not, cannot tell you,
How anxious I have been for all your Dangers,
And how my Heart rejoices at your Safety.
So when the Spring renews the flow'ry Field,
And warns the pregnant Nightingale to build,
She ſeeks the ſafeſt Shelter of the Wood,
Where ſhe may truſt her little tuneful Brood;
Where no rude Swains her ſhady Cell may know,
No Serpents climb, nor blaſting Winds may blow;
Fond of the choſen Place, ſhe views it o'er,
Sits there, and wanders thro' the Grove no more;
Warbling ſhe charms it each returning Night,
And loves it with a Mother's dear Delight. [*Exeunt.*

ACT

## ACT III. SCENE I.

SCENE *the Court.*

*Enter* Alicia *with a Paper.*

*Alic.* THIS Paper to the great Protector's Hand,
With Care and Secrecy muſt be convey'd;
His bold Ambition now avows its Aim,
To pluck the Crown from *Edward*'s infant Brow,
And fix it on his own. I know he holds
My faithleſs *Haſtings* adverſe to his Hopes,
And much devoted to the Orphan King;
On that I build: This Paper meets his Doubts,
And marks my hated Rival as the Cauſe
Of *Haſting*'s Zeal for his dead Maſter's Sons.
Oh Jealouſy! thou Bane of pleaſing Friendſhip,
Thou worſt Invader of our tender Boſoms;
How does thy Rancour poiſon all our Softneſs,
And turn our gentle Natures into Bitterneſs?
See where ſhe comes! Once my Heart's deareſt Bleſſing,
Now my chang'd Eyes are blaſted with her Beauty,
Loath that known Face, and ſicken to behold her.

*Enter* Jane Shore.

*J. Sh.* Now whither ſhall I fly to find Relief?
What charitable Hand will aid me now?
Will ſtay my failing Steps, ſupport my Ruins,
And heal my wounded Mind with balmy Comfort?
Oh, my *Alicia!*

*Alic.* What new Grief is this?
What unforeſeen Misfortune has ſurpriz'd thee?
That racks thy tender Heart thus?

*J. Sh.* O! *Dumont!*

*Alic.* Say! What of him?

*J. Sh.* That friendly, honeſt Man,
Whom *Bellmour* brought of late to my Aſſiſtance,
On whoſe kind Cares, whoſe Diligence and Faith,

My ſureſt Truſt was built, this very Morn
Was ſeiz'd on by the cruel Hand of Power,
Forc'd from my Houſe, and borne away to Priſon.

*Alic.* To Priſon, ſaid you! Can you gueſs the Cauſe?

*J. Sh.* Too well, I fear. His bold Defence of me
Has drawn the Vengeance of Lord *Haſtings* on him.

*Alic.* Lord *Haſtings!* Ha!

*J. Sh.* Some fitter Time muſt tell thee
The Tale of my hard Hap. Upon the preſent
Hang all my poor, my laſt remaining Hopes.
Within this Paper is my Suit contain'd;
Here, as the princely *Gloſter* paſſes forth,
I wait to give it on my humble Knees,
And move him for Redreſs.

[*She gives the Paper to* Alicia, *who opens and ſeems to read it.*]

*Alic.* [*Aſide.*] Now for a Wile,
To ſting my thoughtleſs Rival to the Heart;
To blaſt her fatal Beauties, and divide her
For ever from my perjur'd *Haſtings'* Eyes:
The Wanderer may then look back to me,
And turn to his forſaken Home again:
Their Faſhions are the ſame, it cannot fail.

[*Pulling out the other Paper.*

*J. Sh.* But ſee the great Protector comes this Way,
Attended by a Train of waiting Courtiers,
Give me the Paper, Friend.

*Alic.* [*Aſide.*] For Love and Vengeance!

[*She gives her the other Paper.*

*Enter the Duke of* Gloſter, *Sir* Richard Ratcliffe, Cateſby, *Courtiers, and other Attendants.*

*J. Sh.* [*Kneeling.*] O Noble *Gloſter*, turn thy gracious Eye,
Incline thy pitying Ear to my Complaint,
A poor, undone, forſaken, helpleſs Woman,
Intreats a little Bread for Charity,
To feed her Wants, and ſave her Life from periſhing.

*Gloſt.* Ariſe, fair Dame, and dry your wat'ry Eyes.

[*Receiving the Paper, and raiſing her.*

Beſhrew me, but 'twere Pity of his Heart,

That

That could refuſe a Boon to ſuch a Suitreſs.
Y'have got a noble Friend to be your Advocate;
A worthy and right gentle Lord he is,
And to his Truſt moſt true. This preſent, now,
Some Matters of the State detain our Leiſure;
Thoſe once diſpatch'd, we'll call for you anon,
And give your Griefs Redreſs. Go to! be comforted.
*J. Sh.* Good Heav'ns repay your Highneſs for this Pity,
And ſhow'r down Bleſſings on your Princely Head.
Come, my *Alicia*, reach thy friendly Arm,
And help me to ſupport that feeble Frame,
That nodding totters with oppreſſive Woe,
And ſinks beneath its Load. [*Exit.* J. Shore *and* Alic.
*Gloſt.* Now by my Holidame!
Heavy of Heart ſhe ſeems, and ſore afflicted.
But thus it is when rude Calamity
Lays its ſtrong Gripe upon theſe mincing Minions;
The dainty gew-gaw Forms diſſolve at once,
And ſhiver at the Shock. What ſays her Paper?
[*ſeeming to read.*
Ha! What is this? Come nearer, *Ratcliffe! Cateſby!*
Mark the Contents, and then divine the Meaning.
[*He reads.*
Wonder not, Princely *Gloſter*, at the Notice
This Paper brings you from a Friend unknown;
Lord *Haſtings* is inclin'd to call you Maſter,
And kneel to *Richard*, as to *England*'s King;
But *Shore*'s bewitching Wife miſleads his Heart,
And draws his Service to King *Edward*'s Sons:
Drive her away, you break the Charm that holds him,
And he, and all his Powers, attend on you.
*Rat.* 'Tis wonderful!
*Cat.* The Means by which it came,
Yet ſtranger too!
*Gloſt.* You ſaw it given but now.
*Rat.* She could not know the Purport.
*Gloſt.* No, 'tis plain——
She knows it not, it levels at her Life;
Should ſhe preſume to prate of ſuch high Matters,
The meddling Harlot! Dear ſhe ſhould abide it.

*Cat.* What Hand ſoe'er it comes from, be aſſur'd,
It means your Highneſs well——

*Gloſt.* Upon the Inſtant,
Lord *Haſtings* will be here; this Morn I mean
To prove him to the Quick; then if he flinch,
No more but this, away with him at once,
He muſt be mine or nothing——But he comes!
Draw nearer this Way, and obſerve me well. [*They whiſper.*

*Enter Lord* Haſtings.

L. *Haſt.* This fooliſh Woman hangs about my Heart,
Lingers and wanders in my Fancy ſtill;
This Coyneſs is put on, 'tis Art and Cunning,
And worn to urge Deſire——I muſt poſſeſs her:
The Groom, who lift his ſaucy Hand againſt me,
E'er this, is humbled, and repents his daring.
Perhaps, ev'n ſhe may profit by th' Example,
And teach her Beauty not to ſcorn my Pow'r.

*Gloſt.* This do, and wait me e'er the Council ſits.
[*Exeunt* Rat. *and* Cateſ.
My Lord, y'are well encountred, here has been
A fair Petitioner this Morning with us;
Believe me, ſhe has won me much to pity her:
Alas! her gentle Nature was not made
To buffet with Adverſity. I told her,
How worthily her Cauſe you had befriended;
How much for your good Sake we meant to do,
That you had ſpoke, and all Things ſhould be well.

L. *Haſt.* Your Highneſs binds me ever to your Service.

*Gloſt.* You know your Friendſhip is moſt potent with us,
And ſhares our Power. But of this enough,
For we have other Matters for your Ear;
The State is out of Tune; diſtracting Fears,
And jealous Doubts, jar in our public Counſels;
Amidſt the wealthy City, Murmurs riſe,
Lewd Railings, and Reproach, on thoſe that rule,
With open Scorn of Government; hence Credit,
And public Truſt, 'twixt Man and Man, are broke.
The golden Streams of Commerce are with-held,
Which fed the Wants of needy Hinds and Artizans,
Who therefore curſe the Great, and threat Rebellion.

L. *Haſt.*

L. *Haſt.* The reſty Knaves are over-run with Eaſe,
As Plenty ever is the Nurſe of Faction;
If in good Days like theſe, the headſtrong Herd
Grow madly wanton and repine; it is
Becauſe the Reins of Power are held too ſlack,
And reverend Authority of late
Has worn a Face of Mercy more than Juſtice.

*Gloſt.* Beſhrew my Heart! but you have well divin'd
The Source of theſe Diſorders. Who can wonder
If Riot and Miſrule o'erturn the Realm,
When the Crown ſits upon a Baby Brow?
Plainly to ſpeak; hence comes the gen'ral Cry,
And Sum of all Complaint: 'Twill ne'er be well
With *England*, (thus they talk,) while Children govern.

L. *Haſt.* 'Tis true, the King is young, but what of that?
We feel no Want of *Edward*'s riper Years,
While *Gloſter*'s Valour and moſt Princely Wiſdom
So well ſupply our Infant Sov'reign's Place,
His Youth's Support, and Guardian to his Throne.

*Gloſt.* The Council (much I'm bound to thank 'em for't)
Have plac'd a Pageant Sceptre in my Hand,
Barren of Power, and ſubject to controul;
Scorn'd by my Foes, and uſeleſs to my Friends.
Oh, worthy Lord! were mine the Rule indeed,
I think I ſhould not ſuffer rank Offence
At large to lord it in the Common Weal;
Nor wou'd the Realm be rent by Diſcord thus,
Thus Fear and Doubt betwixt diſputed Titles.

L. *Haſt.* Of this I am to learn; as not ſuppoſing
A Doubt like this——

*Gloſt.* Ay, marry, but there is——
And that of much Concern. Have you not heard,
How on a late Occaſion, Doctor *Shaw*
Has mov'd the People much about the Lawfulneſs
Of *Edward*'s Iſſue? By right grave Authority
Of Learning and Religion, plainly proving,
A baſtard Scion never ſhould be grafted
Upon a Royal Stock; from thence, at full
Diſcourſing on my Brother's former Contract
To Lady *Elizabeth Lucy*, long before

His jolly Match with that ſame buxom Widow
The Queen he left behind him——
L. *Haſt.* Ill befall
Such meddling Prieſts who kindle up Confuſion,
And vex the quiet World with their vain Scruples;
By Heav'n 'tis done in perfect Spite to Peace.
Did not the King,
Our Royal Maſter *Edward*, in Concurrence
With his Eſtates aſſembled, well determine
What Courſe the Sov'reign Rule ſhould take henceforward?
When ſhall the deadly Hate of Faction ceaſe,
When ſhall our long-divided Land have reſt,
If every peeviſh, moody Malcontent
Shall ſet the ſenſeleſs Rabble in an Uproar?
Fright them with Dangers, and perplex their Brains,
Each Day with ſome fantaſtic giddy Change?
*Gloſt.* What if ſome Patriot for the public Good,
Should vary from your Scheme, new-mould the State?
L. *Haſt.* Curſe on the innovating Hand attempts it?
Remember him, the Villain, righteous Heaven
In thy great Day of Vengeance! Blaſt the Traitor
And his pernicious Counſels; who for Wealth,
For Pow'r, the Pride of Greatneſs, or Revenge,
Would plunge his Native Land in Civil Wars.
*Gloſt.* You go too far, my Lord.
L. *Haſt.* Your Highneſs' Pardon——
Have we ſo ſoon forgot thoſe Days of Ruin,
When *York* and *Lancaſter* drew forth the Battles;
When like a Matron, butcher'd by her Sons,
And caſt beſide ſome common Way a Spectacle
Of Horror and Affright to Paſſers by,
Our groaning Country bled at ev'ry Vein,
When Murders, Rapes, and Maſſacres prevail'd;
When Churches, Palaces, and Cities blaz'd;
When Inſolence and Barbariſm triumph'd,
And ſwept away Diſtinction; Peaſants trod
Upon the Necks of Nobles: Low were laid
The Reverend Croſier, and the Holy Mitre,
And Deſolation cover'd all the Land;
Who can remember this, and not, like me,

Here

Here vow to ſheath a Dagger in his Heart,
Whoſe damn'd Ambition would renew thoſe Horrors,
And ſet, once more, that Scene of Blood before us?
*Gloſt.* How now! ſo hot!
L. *Haſt.* So brave, and ſo reſolv'd.
*Gloſt.* Is then our Friendſhip of ſo little Moment,
That you could arm your Hand againſt my Life?
L. *Haſt.* I hope your Highneſs does not think I mean it,
No, Heaven forefend that e'er your Princely Perſon
Should come within the Scope of my Reſentment.
*Gloſt.* O! noble *Haſtings!* Nay, I muſt embrace you;
[*Embraces him.*
By Holy *Paul!* y'are a right honeſt Man;
The Time is full of Danger and Diſtruſt,
And warns us to be wary. Hold me not,
Too apt for Jealouſy and light Surmiſe,
If when I meant to lodge you next my Heart,
I put your Truth to trial. Keep your Loyalty,
And live your King and Country's beſt Support:
For me, I aſk no more than Honour gives,
To think me yours, and rank me with your Friends.
L. *Haſt.* Accept what Thanks a grateful Heart ſhould pay,
O! Princely *Gloſter!* judge me not ungentle,
Of Manners rude, and inſolent of Speech,
If, when the public Safety is in Queſtion,
My Zeal flows warm and eager from my Tongue.
*Gloſt.* Enough of this: To deal in wordy Complement
Is much againſt the Plainneſs of my Nature;
I judge you by myſelf, a clear true Spirit,
And, as ſuch, once more join you to my Boſom;
Farewel, and be my Friend. [*Exit* Gloſter.
L *Haſt.* I am not read,
Nor ſkill'd and practis'd in the Arts of Greatneſs,
To kindle thus, and give a Scope to Paſſion.
The Duke is ſurely noble; but he touch'd me
Ev'n on the tend'reſt Point; the Maſter-ſtring
That makes moſt Harmony or Diſcord to me.
I own the glorious Subject fires my Breaſt,
And my Soul's darling Paſſion ſtands confeſs'd;

Be-

Beyond or Love's or Friendſhip's ſacred Band,
Beyond myſelf I prize my native Land:
On this Foundation would I build my Fame,
And emulate the *Greek* and *Roman* Name;
Think *England*'s Peace bought cheaply with my Blood,
And die with Pleaſure for my Country's Good. [*Exit.*

## ACT IV. SCENE I.

SCENE *continues.*

*Enter Duke of* Gloſter, Ratcliffe, *and* Cateſby.

*Gloſt.* THIS was the Sum of all; that he would brook
No Alteration in the preſent State;
Marry; at laſt, the teſty Gentleman
Was almoſt mov'd to bid us bold Defiance;
But there I dropt the Argument, and changing
The firſt Deſign and Purport of my Speech,
I prais'd his good Affection to young *Edward*,
And left him to believe my Thoughts like his.
Proceed we then in this fore-mention'd Matter,
As nothing bound or truſting to his Friendſhip.

*Rat.* Ill does it thus befall. I could have wiſh'd
This Lord had ſtood with us. His Friends are wealthy,
Thereto, his own Poſſeſſions large and mighty;
The Vaſſals and Dependants on his Power
Firm in Adherence, ready, bold, and many;
His Name had been of Vantage to your Highneſs,
And ſtood our preſent Purpoſe much in Stead.

*Gloſt.* This wayward and perverſe declining from us,
Has warranted at full the friendly Notice,
Which we this Morn receiv'd. I hold it certain,
This puling whining Harlot rules his Reaſon,
And prompts his Zeal for *Edward*'s Baſtard Brood.

*Cat.* If ſhe have ſuch Dominion o'er his Heart,
And turn it at her Will, you rule her Fate;
And ſhould, by Inference and apt Deduction,
Be Arbiter of his. Is not her Bread,
The very Means immediate to her Being,
The Bounty of your Hand? Why does ſhe live,
If not to yield Obedience to your Pleaſure,
To ſpeak, to act, to think as you command?

*Rat.* Let her inſtruct her Tongue to bear your Meſſage;
Teach every Grace to ſmile in your Behalf,
And her deluded Eyes to gloat for you;

His

His ductile Reaſon will be wound about,
Be led and turn'd again, ſay and unſay,
Receive the Yoke, and yield exact Obedience.

*Gloſt.* Your Counſel likes me well, it ſhall be follow'd.
She waits without, attending on her Suit.
Go, call her in, and leave us here alone.

[*Exeunt* Ratcliffe *and* Cateſby.

How poor a Thing is he, how worthy Scorn,
Who leaves the Guidance of Imperial Manhood
To ſuch a paltry Piece of Stuff as this is!
A Moppet made of Prettineſs and Pride;
That oftner does her giddy Fancies change,
Than glittering Dew Drops in the Sun do Colours—
Now, Shame upon it! Was our Reaſon given
For ſuch a Uſe! To be thus puff'd about
Like a dry Leaf, an idle Straw, a Feather,
The Sport of every whiffling Blaſt that blows?
Beſhrew my Heart, but it is wond'rous ſtrange;
Sure there is ſomething more than Witchcraft in them,
That maſters ev'n the wiſeſt of us all.

*Enter* Jane Shore.

Oh! you are come moſt fitly. We have ponder'd
On this your Grievance: And tho' ſome there are,
Nay, and thoſe great ones too, who wou'd enforce
The Rigour of our Power to afflict you,
And bear a heavy Hand, yet fear not you,
We've ta'en you to our Favour, our Protection
Shall ſtand between, and ſhield you from Miſhap.

*J. Sh.* The Bleſſings of a Heart with Anguiſh broken,
And reſcu'd from Deſpair, attend your Highneſs.
Alas! my gracious Lord, what have I done
To kindle ſuch relentleſs Wrath againſt me?
If in the Days of all my paſt Offences,
When moſt my Heart was lifted with Delight,
If I with-held my Morſel from the Hungry,
Forgot the Widow's Want, and Orphan's Cry;
If I have known a Good I have not ſhar'd,
Nor call'd the Poor to take his Portion with me,
Let my worſt Enemies ſtand forth, and now
Deny the Succour, which I gave not then.

*Gloſt.*

*Gloſt.* Marry there are, tho' I believe them not,
Who ſay you meddle in Affairs of State:
That you preſume to prattle, like a Buſy-body,
Give your Advice, and teach the Lords o'th'Council
What fits the Order of the Common-weal.
*J. Sh.* Oh that the buſy World, at leaſt in this,
Would take Example from a Wretch like me!
None then would waſte their Hours in foreign Thoughts,
Forget themſelves, and what concerns their Peace,
To tread the Mazes of fantaſtic Falſhood,
To haunt her idle Sounds and flying Tales,
Thro' all the giddy noiſy Courts of Rumour;
Malicious Slander never would have Leiſure
To ſearch, with prying Eyes, for Faults abroad,
If all, like me, conſider'd their own Hearts,
And wept the Sorrows which they found at Home.
*Gloſt.* Go to! I know your Pow'r, and tho' I truſt not
To ev'ry Breath of Fame, I'm not to learn
That *Haſtings* is profeſs'd your loving Vaſſal.
But fair befall your Beauty: Uſe it wiſely,
And it may ſtand your Fortunes much in Stead,
Give back your forfeit Land with large Increaſe,
And place you high in Safety and in Honour:
Nay, I could point a Way, the which purſuing,
You ſhall not only bring yourſelf Advantage,
But give the Realm much worthy Cauſe to thank you.
*J. Sh.* Oh! where or how?—Can my unworthy Hand
Become an Inſtrument of Good to any?
Inſtruct your lowly Slave, and let me fly
To yield Obedience to your dread Command.
*Gloſt.* Why, that's well ſaid—Thus then—Obſerve me well,
The State, for many high and potent Reaſons,
Deeming my Brother *Edward*'s Sons unfit
For the Imperial Weight of *England*'s Crown——
*J. Sh.* Alas! for Pity. [*Aſide.*
*Gloſt.* Therefore have reſolv'd
To ſet aſide their unavailing Infancy,
And veſt the ſov'reign Rule in abler Hands.
This, tho' of great Importance to the Public,
*Haſtings* for very Peeviſhneſs and Spleen,

Does

Does ſtubbornly oppoſe.

*J. Sh.* Does he? Does *Haſtings?*

*Gloſt.* Ay, *Haſtings.*

*J. Sh.* Reward him for the noble Deed, juſt Heav'ns:
For this one Action, guard him and diſtinguiſh him
With ſignal Mercies, and with great Deliverance,
Save him from Wrong, Adverſity, and Shame.
Let never fading Honours flouriſh round him,
And conſecrate his Name ev'n to Time's End:
Let him know nothing elſe but Good on Earth,
And everlaſting Bleſſedneſs hereafter.

*Gloſt.* How now!

*J. Sh.* The poor, forſaken, Royal little Ones!
Shall they be left a Prey to ſavage Power?
Can they lift up their harmleſs Hands in vain,
Or cry to Heaven for Help, and not be heard?
Impoſſible! O gallant generous *Haſtings*,
Go on, purſue! Aſſert the ſacred Cauſe:
Stand forth, thou Proxy of all-ruling Providence,
And ſave the friendleſs Infants from Oppreſſion.
Saints ſhall aſſiſt thee with prevailing Prayers,
And warring Angels combat on thy Side.

*Gloſt.* You're paſſing rich in this ſame heav'nly Speech,
And ſpend it at your Pleaſure. Nay, but mark me!
My Favour is not bought with Words like theſe.
Go to——you'll teach your Tongue another Tale.

*J. Sh.* No, tho' the Royal *Edward* has undone me,
He was my King, my gracious Maſter ſtill;
He lov'd me too, tho' 'twas a guilty Flame,
And fatal to my Peace, yet ſtill he lov'd me;
With Fondneſs, and with Tenderneſs he doated,
Dwelt in my Eyes, and liv'd but in my Smiles.
And can I——O my Heart abhors the Thought!
Stand by, and ſee his Children robb'd of Right?

*Gloſt.* Dare not, ev'n for thy Soul, to thwart me further;
None of your Arts, your Feigning, and your Foolery;
Your dainty, ſqueamiſh Coying it to me.
Go——to your Lord, your Paramour, be gone;
Liſp in his Ear, hang wanton on his Neck,
And play your monkey Gambols o'er to him:

You know my Purpoſe, look that you purſue it,
And make him yield Obedience to my Will.
Do it——or Woe upon thy Harlot's Head.

*J. Sh.* Oh that my Tongue had ev'ry Grace of Speech,
Great and commanding as the Breath of Kings,
Sweet as the Poets Numbers, and prevailing
As ſoft Perſuaſion to a Love-ſick Maid:
That I had Art and Eloquence divine!
To pay my Duty to my Maſter's Aſhes,
And plead till Death the Cauſe of injur'd Innocence.

*Gloſt.* Ha! Do'ſt thou brave me, Minion! Do'ſt thou know
How vile, how very a Wretch, my Pow'r can make thee;
That I can let looſe Fear, Diſtreſs, and Famine,
To hunt thy Heels, like Hell-hounds, thro' the World;
That I can place thee in ſuch abject State,
As Help ſhall never find thee; where, repining,
Thou ſhalt ſit down, and gnaw the Earth for Anguiſh,
Groan to the pitileſs Winds without Return,
Howl like the midnight Wolf amidſt the Deſart,
And curſe thy Life in Bitterneſs and Miſery?

*J. Sh.* Let me be branded for the public Scorn,
Turn'd forth and driven to wander like a Vagabond,
Be friendleſs and forſaken, ſeek my Bread
Upon the barren Wild, and deſolate Waſte,
Feed on my Sighs, and drink my falling Tears;
E'er I conſent to teach my Lips Injuſtice,
Or wrong the Orphan, who has none to ſave him.

*Gloſt.* 'Tis well—we'll try the Temper of your Heart,
What hoa! Who waits without?

*Enter* Ratcliffe, Cateſby, *and Attendants.*

*Rat.* Your Highneſs' Pleaſure——

*Gloſt.* Go ſome of you, and turn this Strumpet forth!
Spurn her into the Street, there let her periſh,
And rot upon a Dunghill. Thro' the City
See it proclaim'd, that none, on Pain of Death,
Preſume to give her Comfort, Food, or Harbour;
Who miniſters the ſmalleſt Comfort, dies.
Her Houſe, her coſtly Furniture and Wealth,
The Purchaſe of her looſe luxurious Life,

We

We ſeize on, for the Profit of the State.
Away! Be gone!

*J. Sh.* O thou moſt righteous Judge———
Humbly behold, I bow myſelf to thee,
And own thy Juſtice in this hard Decree,
No longer then my ripe Offences ſpare,
But what I merit, let me learn to bear.
Yet ſince 'tis all my Wretchedneſs can give,
For my paſt Crimes my forfeit Life receive;
No Pity for my Suff'rings here I crave,
And only hope Forgiveneſs in the Grave.

[*Exit* J. Shore, *guarded by* Cateſby *and others.*

*Gloſt.* So much for this. Your Project's at an End.
[*To* Rat.
This idle Toy, this Hilding ſcorns my Power,
And ſets us all at naught. See that a Guard
Be ready at my Call. ——

*Rat.* The Council waits
Upon your Highneſs' Leiſure.———

*Gloſt.* Bid them enter.

*Enter the Duke of* Buckingham, *Earl of* Derby, *Biſhop of* Ely, *Lord* Haſtings, *and others, as to the Council. The Duke of* Gloſter *takes his Place at the Upper End, then the reſt ſit.*

*Derb.* In happy Time are we aſſembled here,
To point the Day, and fix the ſolemn Pomp,
For placing *England*'s Crown with all due Rites,
Upon our Sov'reign *Edward*'s youthful Brow.

L. *Haſt.* Some buſy meddling Knaves, 'tis ſaid there are,
As ſuch will ſtill be prating, who preſume
To carp and cavil at his Royal Right;
Therefore I hold it fitting, with the ſooneſt
T'appoint the Order of the Coronation;
So to approve our Duty to the King,
And ſtay the Babbling of ſuch vain Gainſayers.

*Derb.* We all attend to know your Highneſs' Pleaſure.
[*To* Gloſter.

*Gloſt.* My Lords! A Sett of worthy Men you are,
Prudent and juſt, and careful for the State:

There-

Therefore to your moſt grave Determination,
I yield myſelf in all Things; and demand,
What Puniſhment your Wiſdom ſhall think meet
T'inflict upon thoſe damnable Contrivers,
Who ſhall with Potions, Charms, and witching Drugs,
Practiſe againſt our Perſon and our Life.

L. *Haſt.* So much I hold the King yonr Highneſs' Debtor,
So precious are you to the Common-weal,
That I preſume, not only for myſelf,
But in Behalf of theſe my noble Brothers,
To ſay, whoe'er they be, they merit Death.

*Gloſt.* Then judge yourſelves, convince your Eyes of Truth;
Behold my Arm thus blaſted, dry, and wither'd,
[*Pulling up his Sleeve.*
Shrunk like a foul Abortion, and decay'd,
Like ſome untimely Product of the Seaſons,
Robb'd of its Properties of Strength and Office.
This is the Sorcery of *Edward*'s Wife,
Who, in Conjunction with that Harlot *Shore*,
And other like confed'rate Midnight Hags,
By Force of potent Spells, of bloody Characters,
And Conjurations horrible to hear,
Call Fiends and Spectres from the yawning Deep,
And ſet the Miniſters of Hell at work,
To torture and deſpoil me of my Life.

L. *Haſt.* If they have done this Deed———

*Gloſt.* If they have done it!
Talk'ſt thou to me of If's, audacious Traitor!
Thou art that Strumpet Witch's chief Abettor,
The Patron and Complotter of her Miſchiefs,
And join'd in this Contrivance for my Death.
Nay ſtart not, Lords—What ho! a Guard there, Sirs!

*Enter Guard.*

Lord *Haſtings*, I arreſt thee of High Treaſon,
Seize him, and bear him inſtantly away.
He ſha'not live an Hour. By holy *Paul!*
I will not dine before his Head be brought me:
*Ratcliffe*, ſtay you, and ſee that it be done:

The

The reſt that love me, riſe and follow me.

[*Exeunt* Gloſter, *and Lords following.*

*Manent Lord* Haſtings, Ratcliffe, *and Guard.*

L. *Haſt.* What! and no more but this—how, to the Scaffold:
Oh gentle *Ratcliffe!* tell me, do I hold thee?
Or if I dream, what ſhall I do to wake,
To break, to ſtruggle thro' this dread Confuſion?
For ſurely Death itſelf is not ſo painful
As is this ſudden Horror and Surprize.

*Rat.* You heard, the Duke's Commands to me were abſolute,
Therefore, My Lord, addreſs you to your Shrift,
With all good Speed you may. Summon your Courage,
And be yourſelf; for you muſt die this Inſtant.

L. *Haſt.* Yes, *Ratcliffe*, I will take thy friendly Counſel,
And die as a Man ſhould; 'tis ſomewhat hard,
To call my ſcatter'd Spirits home at once:
But ſince what muſt be, muſt be——let Neceſſity
Supply the Place of Time and Preparation,
And arm me for the Blow. 'Tis but to die,
'Tis but to venture on that common Hazard,
Which many a Time in Battle I have run;
'Tis but to do, what, at that very Moment,
In many Nations of the peopled Earth,
A Thouſand and a Thouſand ſhall do with me:
'Tis but to cloſe my Eyes and ſhut out Day-light;
To view no more the wicked Ways of Men,
No longer to behold the Tyrant *Gloſter*,
And be a weeping Witneſs of the Woes,
The Deſolation, Slaughter, and Calamities,
Which he ſhall bring on this unhappy Land.

*Enter* Alicia.

*Alic.* Stand off! and let me paſs——I will, I muſt,
Catch him once more in theſe deſpairing Arms,
And hold him to my Heart—O *Haſtings! Haſtings!*

L. *Haſt.* Alas! why com'ſt thou at this dreadful Moment,
To fill me with new Terrors, new Diſtractions,
To turn me wild with thy diſtemper'd Rage,
And ſhock the Peace of my departing Soul?

Away,

Away, I prithee leave me!
*Alic.* Stop a Minute———
'Till my full Griefs find Paſſage.——Oh the Tyrant!
Perdition fall on *Gloſter's* Head and mine.
L. *Haſt.* What means thy frantic Grief?
*Alic.* I cannot ſpeak———
But I have murder'd thee———Oh! I could tell thee!
L. *Haſt.* Speak, and give Eaſe to thy conflicting Paſſions:
Be quick, nor keep me longer in Suſpenſe,
Time preſſes, and a Thouſand crowding Thoughts
Break in at once! this Way and that they ſnatch,
They tear my hurry'd Soul: All claim Attention,
And yet not one is heard. O ſpeak, and leave me,
For I have Buſineſs would employ an Age,
And but a Minute's Time to get it done in.
*Alic.* That, that's my Grief—'tis I that urge thee on,
Thus haunt thee to the Toil, ſweep thee from Earth,
And drive thee down this Precipice of Fate.
L. *Haſt.* Thy Reaſon is grown wild. Could thy weak Hand
Bring on this mighty Ruin? If it could,
What have I done ſo grievous to thy Soul,
So deadly, ſo beyond the Reach of Pardon,
That nothing but my Life can make Atonement?
*Alic.* Thy cruel Scorn had ſtung me to the Heart,
And ſet my burning Boſom all in Flames:
Raving and mad I flew to my Revenge,
And writ I know not what———told the Protector,
That *Shore's* deteſted Wife, by Wiles, had won thee,
To plot againſt his Greatneſs———He believ'd it,
(Oh dire Event of my pernicious Counſel!)
And, while I meant Deſtruction on her Head,
H' has turn'd it all on thine.
L. *Haſt.* Accurſed Jealouſy!
O mercileſs, wild, and unforgiving Fiend!
Blindfold it runs to undiſtinguiſh'd Miſchief,
And murders all it meets. Curſt be its Rage,
For there is none ſo deadly; doubly curs'd
Be all thoſe eaſy Fools who give it Harbour;
Who turn a Monſter looſe among Mankind,
Fiercer than Famine, War, or ſpotted Peſtilence;
Baneful as Death, and horrible as Hell.

*Alic.* If thou wilt curſe, curſe rather thine own Falſhood;
Curſe the lewd Maxims of thy perjur'd Sex,
Which taught thee firſt to laugh at Faith and Juſtice,
To ſcorn the ſolemn Sanctity of Oaths,
And make a Jeſt of a poor Woman's Ruin:
Curſe thy proud Heart, and thy inſulting Tongue,
That rais'd this fatal Fury in my Soul,
And urg'd my Vengeance to undo us both.

L. *Haſt.* Oh thou Inhuman! turn thy Eyes away,
And blaſt me not with their deſtructive Beams:
Why ſhould I curſe thee with my dying Breath?
Be gone! and let me ſigh it out in Peace.

*Alic.* Can'ſt thou—oh cruel *Haſtings*, leave me thus!
Hear me, I beg thee—I conjure thee, hear me!
While with an agonizing Heart, I ſwear
By all the Pangs I feel, by all the Sorrows,
The Terrors and Deſpair thy Loſs ſhall give me,
My Hate was on my Rival bent alone.
Oh! had I once divin'd, falſe as thou art,
A Danger to thy Life, I would have dy'd,
I would have met it for thee, and made bare
My ready faithful Breaſt to ſave thee from it.

L. *Haſt.* Now mark! and tremble at Heaven's juſt Award,
While thy inſatiate Wrath and fell Revenge
Purſu'd the Innocence which never wrong'd thee,
Behold! the Miſchief falls on thee and me:
Remorſe and Heavineſs of Heart ſhall wait thee,
And everlaſting Anguiſh be thy Portion:
For me, the Snares of Death are wound about me,
And now, in one poor Moment, I am gone.
Oh! if thou haſt one tender Thought remaining,
Fly to thy Cloſet, fall upon thy Knee,
And recommend my parting Soul to Mercy.

*Alic.* Oh! yet, before I go for ever from thee,
Turn thee in Gentleneſs and Pity to me, [*Kneeling.*
And in Compaſſion of my ſtrong Affliction,
Say, is it poſſible you can forgive
The fatal Raſhneſs of ungovern'd Love?
For, oh! 'tis certain, if I had not lov'd thee

Beyond

Beyond my Peace, my Reaſon, Fame, and Life,
Deſir'd to Death, and doated to Diſtraction,
This Day of Horror never ſhould have known us.

L. *Haſt.* Oh! riſe, and let me huſh thy ſtormy Sorrows,
[*Raiſing her.*
Aſſuage thy Tears, for I will chide no more,
No more upbraid thee, thou unhappy Fair-one.
I ſee the Hand of Heav'n is arm'd againſt me;
And, in myſterious Providence, decrees
To puniſh me by thy miſtaken Hand.
Moſt righteous Doom! for, oh! while I behold thee,
Thy Wrongs riſe up in terrible Array,
And charge thy Ruin on me; thy fair Fame,
Thy ſpotleſs Beauty, Innocence, and Youth,
Diſhonour'd, blaſted, and betray'd by me.

*Alic.* And does thy Heart relent for my Undoing?
Oh! that inhuman *Gloſter* could be mov'd,
But half ſo eaſily as I can pardon!

L. *Haſt.* Here then exchange we mutually Forgiveneſs.
So may the Guilt of all my broken Vows,
My Perjuries to thee be all forgotten,
As here my Soul acquits thee of my Death,
As here I part without one angry Thought,
As here I leave thee with the ſofteſt Tenderneſs,
Mourning the Chance of our diſaſtrous Loves,
And begging Heav'n to bleſs and to ſupport thee.

*Rat.* My Lord, diſpatch; the Duke has ſent to chide me
For loitering in my Duty———

L. *Haſt.* I obey.

*Alic.* Inſatiate, ſavage Monſter! Is a Moment
So tedious to thy Malice? Oh! repay him,
Thou great Avenger, give him Blood for Blood:
Guilt haunt him! Fiends purſue him! Lightnings blaſt him!
Some horrid, curſed Kind of Death o'ertake him,
Sudden, and in the Fulneſs of his Sins!
That he may know how terrible it is,
To want that Moment he denies thee now.

L. *Haſt.* 'Tis all in vain, this Rage that tears thy Boſom,
Like a poor Bird that flutters in its Cage,
Thou beat'ſt thyſelf to Death. Retire, I beg thee;

To ſee thee thus, thou know'ſt not how it wounds me,
Thy Agonies are added to my own,
And make the Burthen more than I can bear.
Farewell——Good Angels viſit thy Afflictions,
And bring thee Peace and Comfort from above.

*Alic.* Oh! ſtab me to the Heart, ſome pitying Hand,
Now ſtrike me dead——

L. *Haſt.* One thing I had forgot——
I charge thee by our preſent common Miſeries,
By our paſt Loves, if yet they have a Name,
By all thy Hopes of Peace here and hereafter,
Let not the Rancour of thy Hate purſue
The Innocence of thy unhappy Friend;
Thou know'ſt who 'tis I mean; Oh! ſhould'ſt thou wrong her,
Juſt Heav'n ſhall double all thy Woes upon thee,
And make 'em know no End——Remember this
As the laſt Warning of a dying Man:
Farewell for ever! [*The Guards carry* Haſtings *off.*

*Alic.* For ever? Oh! for ever!
Oh! who can bear to be a Wretch for ever!
My Rival, too! His laſt Thoughts hung on her,
And as he parted, left a Bleſſing for her:
Shall ſhe be bleſt, and I be curſt, for ever!
No; ſince her fatal Beauty was the Cauſe
Of all my Suff'rings, let her ſhare my Pains;
Let her, like me, of ev'ry Joy forlorn,
Devote the Hour when ſuch a Wretch was born;
Like me to Deſarts and to Darkneſs run,
Abhor the Day, and curſe the golden Sun;
Caſt ev'ry Good, and ev'ry Hope behind;
Deteſt the Works of Nature, loath Mankind:
Like me, with Cries diſtracted, fill the Air,
Tear her poor Boſom, rend her frantic Hair;
And prove the Torments of the laſt Deſpair. [*Exit.*

ACT

## ACT V. SCENE I.

SCENE *the Street.*

*Enter* Bellmour *and* Dumont.

*Dum.* YOU ſaw her, then!

*Bell.* I met her as returning,
In ſolemn Penance from the public Croſs.
Before her, certain raſcal Officers,
Slaves in Authority, the Knaves of Juſtice,
Proclaim'd the Tyrant *Gloſter*'s cruel Orders.
On either Side her march'd an ill-look'd Prieſt,
Who with ſevere, with horrid haggard Eyes,
Did ever and anon, by Turns, upbraid her,
And thunder in her trembling Ear Damnation.
Around her, numberleſs the Rabble flow'd,
Should'ring each other, crowding for a View,
Gaping and gazing, taunting and reviling;
Some pitying, but thoſe, alas! how few!
The moſt, ſuch iron Hearts we are, and ſuch
The baſe Barbarity of human Kind,
With Inſolence and lewd Reproach purſu'd her,
Hooting and railing, and with villainous Hands
Gath'ring the Filth from out the common Ways,
To hurl upon her Head.

*Dum.* Inhuman Dogs!
How did ſhe bear it?

*Bell.* With the gentleſt Patience;
Submiſſive, ſad, and lowly was her Look;
A burning Taper in her Hand ſhe bore,
And on her Shoulders careleſsly confus'd,
With looſe Neglect, her lovely Treſſes hung;
Upon her Cheek a faintiſh Fluſh was ſpread,
Feeble ſhe ſeem'd, and ſorely ſmit with Pain.
While bare-foot as ſhe trod the flinty Pavement,
Her Footſteps all along were mark'd with Blood.
Yet ſilent ſtill ſhe paſs'd and unrepining;

Her ſtreaming Eyes bent ever on the Earth,
Except when in ſome bitter Pang of Sorrow,
To Heav'n ſhe ſeem'd in fervent Zeal to raiſe,
And beg that Mercy Man deny'd her here.
*Dum.* When was this piteous Sight?
*Bell.* Theſe laſt two Days.
You know my Care was wholly bent on you,
To find the happy Means of your Deliverance,
Which but for *Haſtings'* Death I had not gain'd.
During that Time, altho' I have not ſeen her,
Yet divers truſty Meſſengers I've ſent,
To wait about, and watch a fit Convenience
To give her ſome Relief, but all in vain;
A churliſh Guard attends upon her Steps,
Who menace thoſe with Death that bring her Comfort,
And drive all Succour from her.
*Dum.* Let 'em threaten;
Let proud Oppreſſion prove its fierceſt Malice;
So Heav'n befriend my Soul, as here I vow
To give her Help, and ſhare one Fortune with her.
*Bell.* Mean you to ſee her, thus, in your own Form?
*Dum.* I do.
*Bell* And have you thought upon the Conſequence?
*Dum.* What is there I ſhould fear?
*Bell.* Have you examin'd
Into your inmoſt Heart, and try'd at leiſure
The ſev'ral ſecret Springs that move the Paſſions?
Has Mercy fix'd her Empire there ſo ſure,
That Wrath and Vengeance never may return?
Can you reſume a Huſband's Name, and bid
That wakeful Dragon, fierce Reſentment, ſleep?
*Dum.* Why doſt thou ſearch ſo deep, and urge my Memory,
To conjure up my Wrongs to Life again?
I have long labour'd to forget myſelf,
To think on all Time, backward, like a Space,
Idle and void, where nothing e'er had Being;
But thou haſt peopled it again: Revenge
And Jealouſy renew their horrid Forms,
Shoot all their Fires, and drive me to Diſtraction.

*Bell.*

*Bell.* Far be the Thought from me! My Care was only
To arm you for the Meeting: Better were it
Never to ſee her, than to let that Name
Recall forgotten Rage, and make the Huſband
Deſtroy the gen'rous Pity of *Dumont*.

*Dum.* Oh! thou haſt ſet my buſy Brain at work,
And now ſhe muſters up a Train of Images,
Which, to preſerve my Peace, I had caſt aſide,
And ſunk in deep Oblivion — Oh! that Form!
That Angel Face on which my Dotage hung!
How I have gaz'd upon her! till my Soul
With very Eagerneſs went forth towards her,
And iſſu'd at my Eyes——— Was there a Gem
Which the Sun ripens in the *Indian* Mine,
Or the rich Boſom of the Ocean yields;
What was there Art could make, or Wealth could buy,
Which I have left unſought to deck her Beauty?
What could her King do more?—And yet ſhe fled.

*Bell.* Away with that ſad Fancy———

*Dum.* Oh! that Day!
The Thought of it muſt live for ever with me.
I met her, *Bellmour*, when the Royal Spoiler
Bore her in Triumph from my widow'd Home!
Within his Chariot, by his Side ſhe ſat,
And liſten'd to his Talk with downward Looks,
'Till ſudden as ſhe chanc'd aſide to glance,
Her Eyes encounter'd mine—Oh! then, my Friend!
Oh! who can paint my Grief and her Amazement!
As at the Stroke of Death, twice turn'd ſhe pale,
And twice a burning Crimſon bluſh'd all o'er her;
Then with a Shriek, Heart-wounding, loud ſhe cry'd,
While down her Cheeks two guſhing Torrents ran
Faſt falling on her Hands, which thus ſhe wrung———
Mov'd at her Grief, the Tyrant Raviſher,
With courteous Action woo'd her oft to turn;
Earneſt he ſeem'd to plead, but all in vain;
Ev'n to the laſt ſhe bent her Sight toward me,
And follow'd me———till I had loſt myſelf.

*Bell.* Alas! for Pity! Oh! thoſe ſpeaking Tears!
Could they be falſe? Did ſhe not ſuffer with you?
And tho' the King by Force poſſeſs'd her Perſon,

Her unconſenting Heart dwelt ſtill with you;
If all her former Woes were not enough,
Look on her now, behold her where ſhe wanders,
Hunted to Death, diſtreſs'd on every Side,
With no one Hand to help; and tell me then,
If ever Miſery were known like hers?

*Dum.* And can ſhe bear it? Can that delicate Frame
Endure the beating of a Storm ſo rude?
Can ſhe, for whom the various Seaſons chang'd
To court her Appetite, and crown her Board,
For whom the foreign Vintages were preſs'd,
For whom the Merchant ſpread his ſilken Stores,
Can ſhe———
Intreat for Bread, and want the needful Raiment,
To wrap her ſhiv'ring Boſom from the Weather?
When ſhe was mine, no Care came ever nigh her;
I thought the gentleſt Breeze that wakes the Spring,
Too rough to breathe upon her; Chearfulneſs
Danc'd all the Day before her, and at Night
Soft Slumbers waited on her downy Pillow———
Now ſad and ſhelterleſs, perhaps, ſhe lies,
Where piercing Winds blow ſharp, and the chill Rain
Drops from ſome Pent-houſe on her wretched Head,
Drenches her Locks, and kills her with the Cold.
It is too much———Hence with her paſt Offences,
They are aton'd at full———Why ſtay we, then?
Oh! let us haſte, my Friend, and find her out.

*Bell.* Somewhere about this Quarter of the Town,
I hear the poor abandon'd Creature lingers:
Her Guard, tho' ſet with ſtricteſt Watch to keep
All Food and Friendſhip from her, yet permit her
To wander in the Streets, there chooſe her Bed,
And reſt her Head on what cold Stone ſhe pleaſes.

*Dum.* Here let us then divide; each in his Round
To ſearch her Sorrows out; whoſe Hap it is
Firſt to behold her, this way let him lead
Her fainting Steps, and meet we here together. [*Exeunt.*

*Enter* Jane Shore, *her Hair hanging looſe on her Shoulders, and bare-footed.*

*J. Sh.* Yet, yet endure, nor murmur, Oh! my Soul!
For

For are not thy Tranſgreſſions great and numberleſs?
Do they not cover thee like riſing Floods,
And preſs thee like a Weight of Waters down?
Does not the Hand of Righteouſneſs afflict thee?
And who ſhall plead againſt it? Who ſhall ſay
To Pow'r Almighty, Thou haſt done enough;
Or bid his dreadful Rod of Vengeance ſtay?
Wait then with Patience, till the circling Hours
Shall bring the Time of thy appointed Reſt,
And lay thee down in Death. The Hireling thus
With Labour drudges out the painful Day,
And often looks with long expecting Eyes
To ſee the Shadows riſe, and be diſmiſs'd.
And, hark! methinks the Roar that late purſu'd me,
Sinks like the Murmurs of a falling Wind,
And ſoftens into Silence. Does Revenge
And Malice then grow weary and forſake me?
My Guard, too, that obſerv'd me ſtill ſo cloſe,
Tire in the Taſk of their inhuman Office,
And loiter far behind. Alas! I faint,
My Spirits fail at once——This is the Door
Of my *Alicia*——Bleſſed Opportunity!
I'll ſteal a little Succour from her Goodneſs,
Now, while no Eye obſerves me. [*She knocks at the Door.*

*Enter Servant.*

Is your Lady,
My gentle Friend, at home? Oh! bring me to her.
[*Going in.*

*Ser.* Hold, Miſtreſs, whither wou'd you?
[*Putting her back.*

*J. Sh.* Do you not know me?

*Ser.* I know you well, and know my Orders, too.
You muſt not enter here——

*J. Sh.* Tell my *Alicia*,
'Tis I would ſee her.

*Ser.* She is ill at Eaſe,
And will admit no Viſitor.

*J. Sh.* But tell her
'Tis I, her Friend, the Partner of her Heart,
Wait at the Door and beg——

*Ser.* 'Tis all in vain,———,
Go hence, and howl to thoſe that will regard you.
[*Shuts the Door, and* Exit.

*J. Sh* It was not always thus; the Time has been,
When this unfriendly Door, that bars my Paſſage,
Flew wide, and almoſt leap'd from off its Hinges,
To give me Entrance here; when this good Houſe
Has pour'd forth all its Dwellers to receive me;
When my Approach has made a little Holy-day.
And ev'ry Face was dreſs'd in Smiles to meet me:
But now 'tis otherwiſe; and thoſe who bleſs'd me,
Now curſe me to my Face. Why ſhould I wander,
Stray further on, for I can die ev'n here!
[*She ſits down at the Door.*

*Enter* Alicia *in Diſorder; two Servants following.*

*Alic.* What Wretch art thou? whoſe Miſery and Baſeneſs
Hangs on my Door; whoſe hateful Whine of Woe
Breaks in upon my Sorrows, and diſtracts
My jarring Senſes with thy Beggar's Cry.

*J. Sh.* A very Beggar, and a Wretch, indeed;
One driv'n by ſtrong Calamity to ſeek
For Succours here; one periſhing for Want,
Whoſe Hunger has not taſted Food theſe three Days;
And humbly aſks, for Charity's dear Sake,
A Draught of Water, and a little Bread.

*Alic.* And doſt thou come to me, to me for Bread?
I know thee not——Go———hunt for it Abroad,
Where wanton Hands upon the Earth have ſcatter'd it,
Or caſt it on the Waters——Mark the Eagle,
And hungry Vulture, where they wind the Prey;
Watch where the Ravens of the Valley feed,
And ſeek thy Food with them—I know thee not.

*J. Sh.* And yet there was a Time, when my *Alicia*
Has thought unhappy *Shore* her deareſt Bleſſing,
And mourn'd that live long Day ſhe paſs'd without me,
When pair'd like Turtles, we were ſtill together;
When often as we prattled Arm in Arm,
Inclining fondly to me ſhe has ſworn,
She lov'd me more than all the World beſides.

*Alic.*

*Alic.* Ha! ſay'ſt thou! Let me look upon thee well—
'Tis true—I know thee now—A Miſchief on thee!
Thou art that fatal Fair, that curſed She,
That ſet my Brain a madding. Thou haſt robb'd me;
Thou haſt undone me—Murder! Oh my *Haſtings!*
See his pale bloody Head ſhoots glaring by me!
Give him me back again, thou ſoft Deluder,
Thou beauteous Witch——

*J. Sh.* Alas! I never wrong'd you——
Oh! then be good to me; have Pity on me;
Thou never knew'ſt the Bitterneſs of Want,
And may'ſt thou never know it. Oh! beſtow
Some poor Remain, the Voiding of thy Table,
A Morſel to ſupport my famiſh'd Soul.

*Alic.* Avaunt! and come not near me——

*J. Sh.* To thy Hand
I truſted all, gave my whole Store to thee,
Nor do I aſk it back; allow me but
The ſmalleſt Pittance, give me but to eat,
Leſt I fall down and periſh here before thee.

*Alic.* Nay! tell not me! Where is thy King, thy *Edward*,
And all the ſmiling cringing Train of Courtiers,
That bent the Knee before thee?

*J. Sh.* Oh! for Mercy!

*Alic.* Mercy! I know it not—for I am miſerable.
I'll give thee Miſery, for here ſhe dwells;
This is her Houſe, where the Sun never dawns,
The Bird of Night ſits ſcreaming o'er the Roof,
Grim Spectres ſweep along the horrid Gloom,
And nought is heard but Wailings and Lamentings.
Hark! ſomething cracks above! it ſhakes, it totters!
And ſee, the nodding Ruin falls to cruſh me!
'Tis fall'n, 'tis here! I feel it on my Brain!

1 *Serv.* This Sight diſorders her——

2 *Serv.* Retire, dear Lady——
And leave this Woman——

*Alic.* Let her take my Counſel:
Why ſhould'ſt thou be a Wretch?—Stab, tear thy Heart,
And rid thyſelf of this deteſted Being,

I wo'not linger long behind thee here.
A waving Flood of blueiſh Fire ſwells o'er me;
And now 'tis out, and I am drown'd in Blood.
Ha! what art thou! thou horrid headleſs Trunk?
It is my *Haſtings!* See, he wafts me on!
Away! I go, I fly! I follow thee!
But come not thou with Miſchief-making Beauty
To interpoſe between us, look not on him,
Give thy fond Arts and thy Deluſions o'er;
For thou ſhalt never, never part us more.
[*She runs off, her Servants following.*

*J. Sh.* Alas! ſhe raves; her Brain, I fear, is turn'd.
In Mercy look upon her, gracious Heav'n,
Nor viſit her for any Wrong to me.
Sure I am near upon my Journey's End;
My Head runs round, my Eyes begin to fail,
And dancing Shadows ſwim before my Sight;
I can no more, [*lies down*;] receive me, thou cold Earth,
Thou common Parent, take me to thy Boſom,
And let me reſt with thee.

*Enter* Bellmour.

*Bell.* Upon the Ground!
Thy Miſeries can never lay thee lower,
Look up, thou poor afflicted one! Thou Mourner,
Whom none has comforted! Where are thy Friends,
The dear Companions of thy joyful Days,
Whoſe Hearts thy warm Proſperity made glad,
Whoſe Arms were taught to grow like Ivy round thee,
And bind thee to their Boſoms?—Thus with thee,
Thus let us live, and let us die, they ſaid,
For ſure thou art the Siſter of our Loves,
And nothing ſhall divide us—Now where are they?

*J. Sh.* Ah! *Bellmour*, where indeed! They ſtand aloof,
And view my Deſolation from afar;
When they paſs by, they ſhake their Heads in Scorn,
And cry, Behold the Harlot and her End!
And yet thy Goodneſs turns aſide to pity me.
Alas! there may be Danger, get thee gone!

Let

Let me not pull a Ruin on thy Head,
Leave me to die alone, for I am fall'n
Never to riſe, and all Relief is vain.
*Bell.* Yet raiſe thy drooping Head; for I am come
To chaſe away Deſpair. Behold! where yonder
That honeſt Man, that faithful brave *Dumont*,
Is haſting to thy Aid———
*J. Sh. Dumont!* Ha! where!
[*Raiſing herſelf, and looking about.*
Then Heav'n has heard my Pray'r, his very Name
Renews the Springs of Life, and chears my Soul.
Has he then 'ſcap'd the Snare?
*Bell.* He has; but ſee——
He comes unlike to that *Dumont* you knew,
For now he wears your better Angel's Form,
And comes to viſit you with Peace and Pardon.

*Enter* Shore.

*J. Sh.* Speak, tell me! Which is he? And ho! What would
This dreadful Viſion! See it comes upon me——
It is my Huſband———Ah! [*She ſwoons.*
*Sh.* She faints! ſupport her!
Suſtain her Head, while I infuſe this Cordial
Into her dying Lips——from ſpicy Drugs,
Rich Herbs and Flow'rs the potent Juice is drawn;
With wond'rous Force it ſtrikes the lazy Spirits,
Drives them around, and wakens Life anew.
*Bell.* Her Weakneſs could not bear the ſtrong Surprize.
But ſee, ſhe ſtirs! And the returning Blood
Faintly begins to bluſh again, and kindle
Upon her aſhy Cheek———
*Sh.* So—gently raiſe her—— [*Raiſing her up.*
*J. Sh.* Ha! What art thou? *Bellmour!*
*Bell.* How fare you, Lady?
*J. Sh.* My Heart is thrill'd with Horror—
*Bell.* Be of Courage———
Your Huſband lives! 'tis he, my worthieſt Friend—

*J. Sh.*

*J. Sh.* Still art thou there!—Still doſt thou hover round me!
Oh ſave me, *Bellmour*, from his angry Shade!
*Bell* 'Tis he himſelf!—he lives! look up—
*J. Sh.* I dare not!
Oh that my Eyes could ſhut him out for ever—
*Sh.* Am I ſo hateful, then, ſo deadly to thee,
To blaſt thy Eyes with Horror? Since I'm grown
A Burden to the World, myſelf, and thee,
Wou'd I had ne'er ſurviv'd to ſee thee more.
*J. Sh.* Oh thou moſt injur'd—Doſt thou live, indeed!
Fall then ye Mountains on my guilty Head,
Hide me, ye Rocks, within your ſecret Caverns;
Caſt thy black Veil upon my Shame, O Night!
And ſhield me with thy ſable Wing for ever.
*Sh.* Why doſt thou turn away?———Why tremble thus?
Why thus indulge thy Fears? and in Deſpair,
Abandon thy diſtracted Soul to Horror?
Caſt every black and guilty Thought behind thee,
And let 'em never vex thy Quiet more.
My Arms, my Heart are open to receive thee,
To bring thee back to thy forſaken Home,
With tender Joy, with fond forgiving Love,
And all the Longings of my firſt Deſires.
*J. Sh.* No, arm thy Brow with Vengeance; and appear
The Miniſter of Heav'n's inquiring Juſtice.
Array thyſelf all terrible for Judgment,
Wrath in thy Eyes, and Thunder in thy Voice;
Pronounce my Sentence, and if yet there be
A Woe I have not felt, inflict it on me.
*Sh.* The Meaſure of my Sorrows is complete;
And I am come to ſnatch thee from Injuſtice.
The Hand of Pow'r no more ſhall cruſh thy Weakneſs,
Nor proud Oppreſſion grind thy humble Soul.
*J. Sh.* Art thou not riſen by Miracle from Death?
Thy Shroud is fall'n from off thee, and the Grave

Was

Was bid to give thee up, that thou might'ſt come
The Meſſenger of Grace and Goodneſs to me,
To ſeal my Peace, and bleſs me ere I go.
Oh let me then fall down beneath thy Feet,
And weep my Gratitude for ever there;
Give me your Drops, ye ſoft deſcending Rains,
Give me your Streams, ye never ceaſing Springs,
That my ſad Eyes may ſtill ſupply my Duty,
And feed an everlaſting Flood of Sorrow.

*Sh.* Waſte not thy feeble Spirits——I have long
Beheld, unknown, thy Mourning and Repentance;
Therefore my Heart has ſet aſide the paſt,
And holds thee white, as unoffending Innocence:
Therefore in Spite of cruel *Gloſter*'s Rage,
Soon as my Friend had broke my Priſon Doors,
I flew to thy Aſſiſtance. Let us haſte,
Now while Occaſion ſeems to ſmile upon us,
Forſake this Place of Shame, and find a Shelter.

*J. Sh.* What ſhall I ſay to you? But I obey——

*Sh.* Lean on my Arm———

*J. Sh.* Alas! I'm wond'rous faint:
But that's not ſtrange, I have not eat theſe three Days.

*Sh.* Oh, mercileſs! look here, my Love, I've brought thee
Some rich Conſerves———

*J. Sh.* How can you be ſo good?
But you were ever thus; I well remember
With what fond Care, what Diligence of Love,
You laviſh'd out your Wealth to buy me Pleaſures,
Preventing every Wiſh: Have you forgot
The coſtly String of Pearl you brought me home,
And ty'd about my Neck?———How could I leave you?

*Sh.* Taſte ſome of this, or this———

*J. Sh.* You're ſtrangely alter'd———
Say, gentle *Bellmour*, is he not? How pale
Your Viſage is become? Your Eyes are hollow;
Nay, you are wrinkled too———Alas the Day!

My

My Wretchedneſs has coſt you many a Tear,
And many a bitter Pang, ſince laſt we parted.

*Sh.* No more of that———Thou talk'ſt, but do'ſt not eat.

*J. Sh.* My feeble Jaws forget their common Office,
My taſteleſs Tongue cleaves to the clammy Roof,
And now a gen'ral Loathing grows upon me———
Oh! I am ſick at Heart!———

*Sh.* Thou murd'rous Sorrow!
Wo't thou ſtill drink her Blood, purſue her ſtill!
Muſt ſhe then die! Oh my poor Penitent,
Speak Peace to thy ſad Heart: She hears me not;
Grief maſters ev'ry Senſe——help me to hold her——

*Enter* Cateſby *with a Guard.*

*Cat.* Seize on 'em both, as Traitors to the State.—

*Bell.* What means this Violence!——

[*Guards lay hold on* Shore *and* Bellmour.

*Cat.* Have we not found you,
In Scorn of the Protector's ſtrict Command,
Aſſiſting this baſe Woman, and abetting
Her Infamy?

*Sh.* Infamy on thy Head!
Thou Tool of Power, thou Pander to Authority!
I tell thee, Knave, thou know'ſt of none ſo virtuous,
And ſhe that bore thee was an *Æthiop* to her.

*Cat.* You'll anſwer this at full——Away with 'em.

*Sh.* Is Charity grown Treaſon to your Court?
What honeſt Man would live beneath ſuch Rulers?
I am content that we ſhould die together——

*Cat.* Convey the Men to Priſon; but for her,
Leave her to hunt her Fortune as ſhe may.

*J. Sh.* I will not part with him——for me!——for me!
Oh! muſt he die for me!

[*Following him as he is carried off*——*She falls.*

*Sh.* Inhuman Villains! [*Breaks from the Guards.*
Stand off! The Agonies of Death are on her——
She pulls, ſhe gripes me hard with her cold Hand.

*J. Sh.*

*J. Sh.* Was this Blow wanting to complete my Ruin!
Oh let him go, ye Miniſters of Terror.
He ſhall offend no more, for I will die,
And yield Obedience to your cruel Maſter.
Tarry a little, but a little longer,
And take my laſt Breath with you.
*Sh.* Oh my Love!
Why have I liv'd to ſee this bitter Moment,
This Grief by far ſurpaſſing all my former!
Why doſt thou fix thy dying Eyes upon me,
With ſuch an earneſt, ſuch a piteous Look,
As if thy Heart were full of ſome ſad Meaning
Thou could'ſt not ſpeak?———
*J. Sh.* Forgive me!———but forgive me!
*Sh.* Be Witneſs for me, ye celeſtial Hoſt,
Such Mercy and ſuch Pardon as my Soul
Accords to thee, and begs of Heav'n to ſhew thee;
May ſuch befal me at my lateſt Hour,
And make my Portion bleſt or curs'd for ever.
*J. Sh.* Then all is well, and I ſhall ſleep in Peace.—
'Tis very dark, and I have loſt you now——
Was there not ſomething I would have bequeath'd you?
But I have nothing left me to beſtow,
Nothing but one ſad Sigh. O Mercy, Heav'n! [*Dies.*
*Bell.* There fled the Soul,
And left her Load of Miſery behind.
*Sh.* Oh my Heart's Treaſure! Is this pale ſad Viſage
All that remains of thee; are theſe dead Eyes
The Light that cheer'd my Soul? Oh heavy Hour!
But I will fix my trembling Lips to thine,
'Till I am cold and ſenſeleſs quite, as thou art.
What, muſt we part, then?——will you——
[*To the Guards taking him away.*
Fare thee well—— [*Kiſſing her.*
Now execute your Tyrant's Will, and lead me
To Bonds, or Death, 'tis equally indifferent.

*Bell.*

*Bell.* Let thoſe, who view this ſad Example, know,
What Fate attends the broken Marriage Vow;
And teach their Children in ſucceeding Times,
No common Vengeance waits upon theſe Crimes,
When ſuch ſevere Repentance could not ſave
From Want, from Shame, and an untimely Grave.

[*Exeunt.*




EPI-

# EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. OLDFIELD.

*YE modeſt Matrons all, ye virtuous Wives,*
*Who lead with horrid Huſbands, decent Lives;*
*You, who, for all you are in ſuch a Taking,*
*To ſee your Spouſes drinking, gaming, raking,*
*Yet make a Conſcience ſtill of Cuckold-making;*
*What can we ſay your Pardon to obtain?*
*This Matter here was prov'd againſt poor* Jane:
*She never once deny'd it; but, in ſhort,*
*Whimper'd—and cry'd—*Sweet Sir, I'm ſorry for't.
*'Twas well he met a kind, good-natur'd Soul,*
*We are not all ſo eaſy to controul:*
*I fancy one might find in this good Town,*
*Some wou'd ha' told the Gentleman his own;*
*Have anſwer'd ſmart,—*To what do you pretend,
Blockhead?—As if I muſt not ſee a Friend:
Tell me of Hackney Coaches—Jaunts to th' City—
Where ſhould I buy my China?—Faith, I'll fit ye—
*Our Wife was of a milder, meeker Spirit;*
*You!—Lords and Maſters!—was not that ſome Merit?*
*Don't you allow it to be virtuous Bearing,*
*When we ſubmit thus to your Domineering?*
*Well, Peace be with her, ſhe did wrong moſt ſurely;*
*But ſo do many more who look demurely.*
*Nor ſhou'd our mourning Madam weep alone,*
*There are more Ways of Wickedneſs than one.*
*If the reforming Stage ſhould fall to ſhaming*
*Ill-nature, Pride, Hypocriſy, and Gaming;*
*The Poets frequently might move Compaſſion,*
*And with* She-*Tragedies o'er-run the Nation.*

*Then*

*Then judge the fair Offender with Good-nature,*
*And let your Fellow-feeling curb your Satire.*
*What if our Neighbours have ſome little Failing,*
*Muſt we needs fall to Damning and to Railing?*
*For her Excuſe too, be it underſtood,*
*That if the Woman was not quite ſo good,*
*Her Lover was a King, ſhe Fleſh and Blood.*
*And ſince ſh' has dearly paid the ſinful Score,*
*Be kind at laſt, and pity poor* Jane Shore.




FINIS.

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